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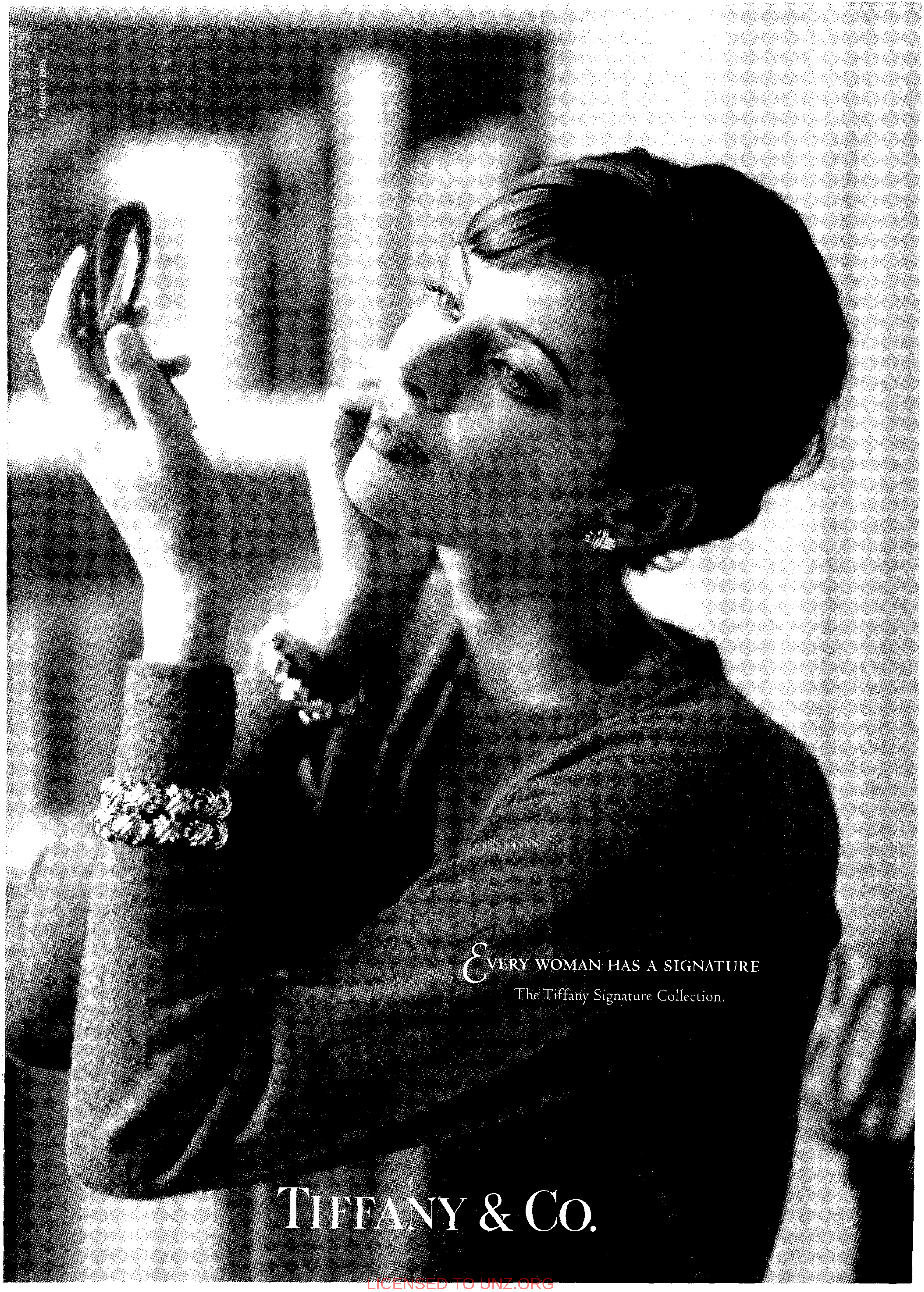
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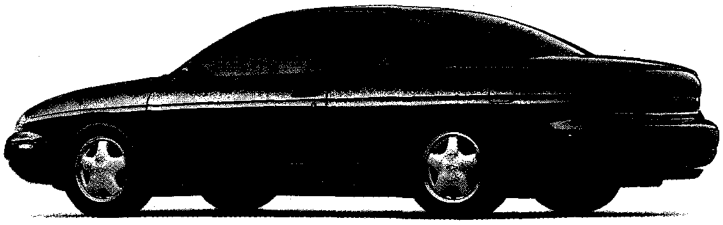

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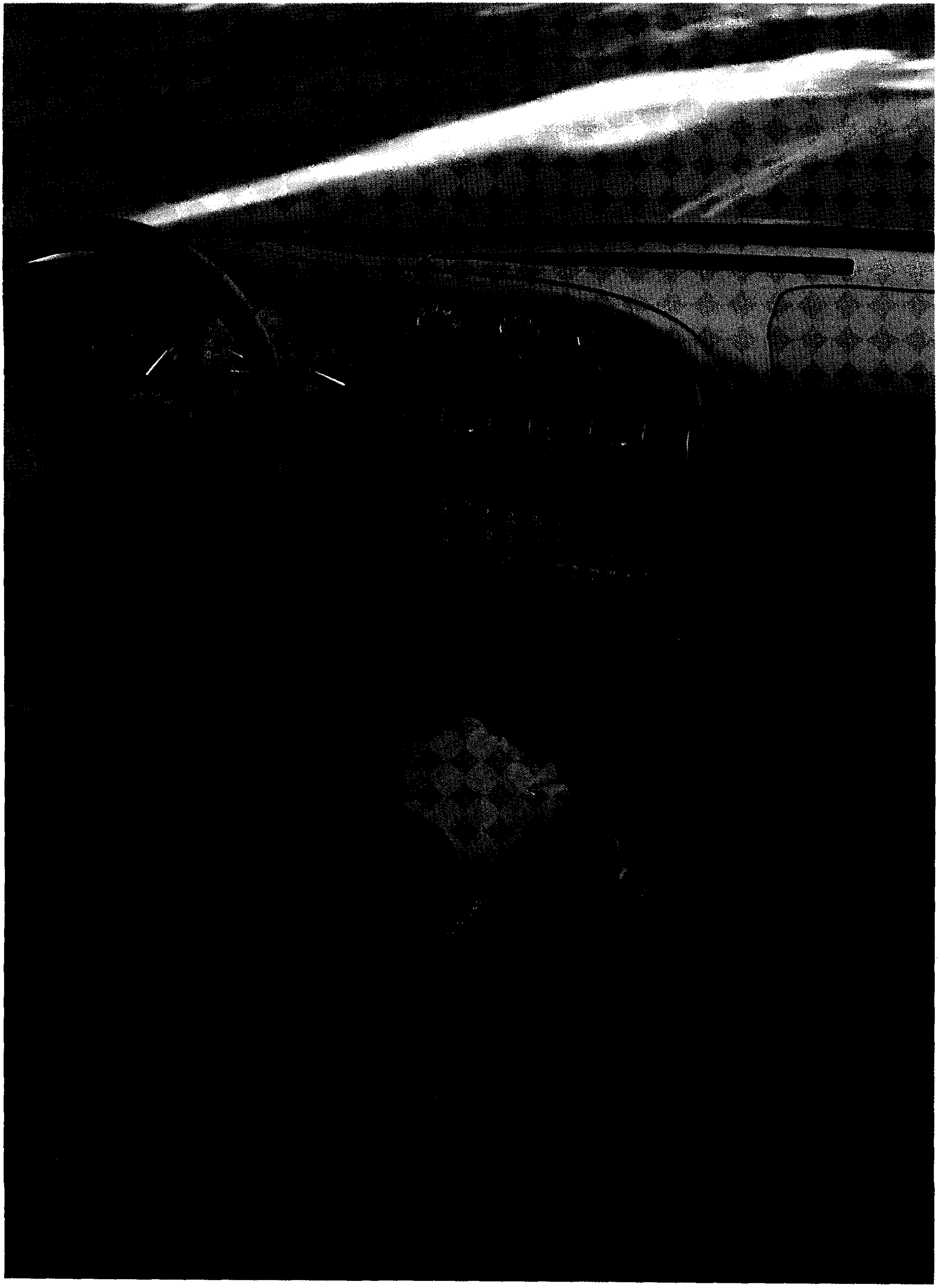

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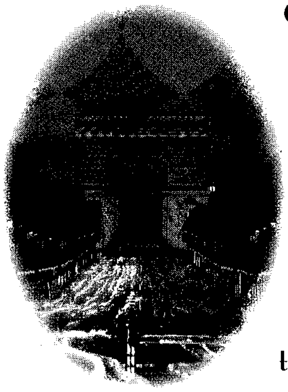

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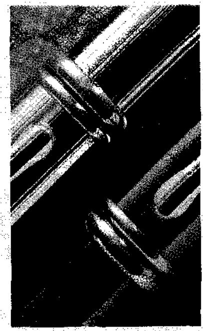

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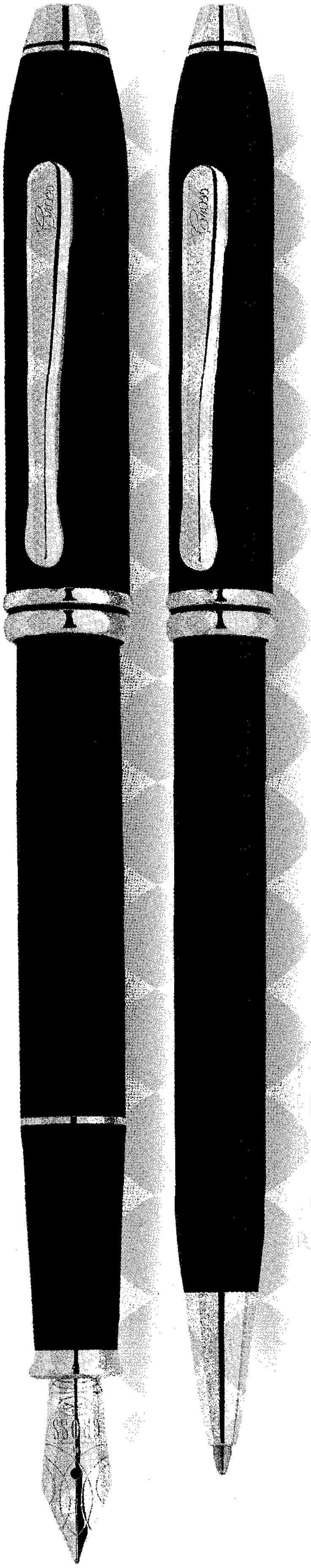

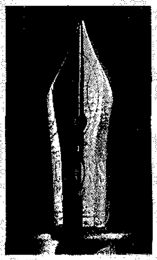

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Richard M. Shaw

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COMMENT

WITHOUT A TRACE

A timely lesson from a forgotten East Texas tragedy.

A "TAGGANT"—the word is a neologism of these weird times—is a microscopic plastic or metal marker that can be added to explosive materials to allow them to be traced if they are used for criminal purposes, such as blowing up federal office buildings. The technology of taggants began to emerge twenty years ago, but their use in this country has been blocked by the lobbying of the explosives industry and—why is this not a surprise?—the National Rifle Association. The group has argued that, among other things, putting impurities in the gunpowder used by antique-rifle hobbyists (and pipe-bomb makers) would somehow pose a threat to their Second Amendment rights.

Fifty-eight years before Oklahoma City, a comparable blast broke the spirit of a raw East Texas town called London—a tragedy so thoroughly forgotten that it didn't get included in any of the neatly boxed lists of past explosions that have accompanied newspaper and magazine reports of the Oklahoma horror. On March 18, 1937, at 3:15 P.M., a spark ignited a cloud of natural gas that had accumulated in the basement of the London School, setting off a giant blast, which lifted the roof of the building into the sky, then dropped it to crumple on the launchpad of the building's foundations. Two hundred and ninety-three people were killed, most of them children in the first through eleventh grades.

The explosion was in part a consequence of the local school board's unforgivable budgetary stinginess. London was rolling in cash during the Depression: in 1930, a wildcatter called Columbus (Dad) Joiner had happened upon the East Texas oil field—two hundred square miles of black gold, the biggest discovery of its kind in the oil industry's then brief history. Yet to save a few dollars the school authorities tapped into a neighboring oil company's natural-gas pipeline—illegally, though with the company's consent—in order to fuel the building's furnace free of charge. This practice was not unheard of in East Texas at the time, but natural gas, often a by-product of petroleum extraction, was not in widespread use as a heating fuel; it was regarded as extremely dan-

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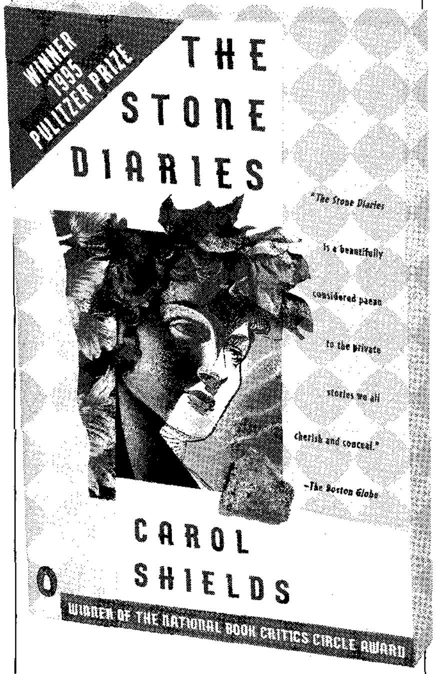
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gerous and was usually just flared off from the rigs.

London never recovered from the blast that turned its pride in being a "boom town" into a bitter joke. The grieving townspeople drifted away, and the town, which might have become a bustling medium-sized city, was bravely renamed New London, but dwindled into the village of fewer than a thousand people that it is today. Charges were never brought against the school board, and a 1938 memorial service for the victims went largely unattended. The tragedy did have one beneficial effect, however: it brought on government regulation, the kind that the Oklahoma bombers apparently disparage. Legislation was immediately adopted requiring companies to add an odorant—a kind of olfactory taggant—to natural gas. The result was the distinctive aroma that is now familiar to everyone—so familiar that many people no longer realize that natural gas is naturally odorless. Yet one can easily imagine that if such a measure were called for today, industry lobbyists and antigovernment politicians would be decrying it as needlessly meddlesome and costly. Perhaps the N.R.A. would get into the act, too; after all, there is such a thing as a gas rifle.

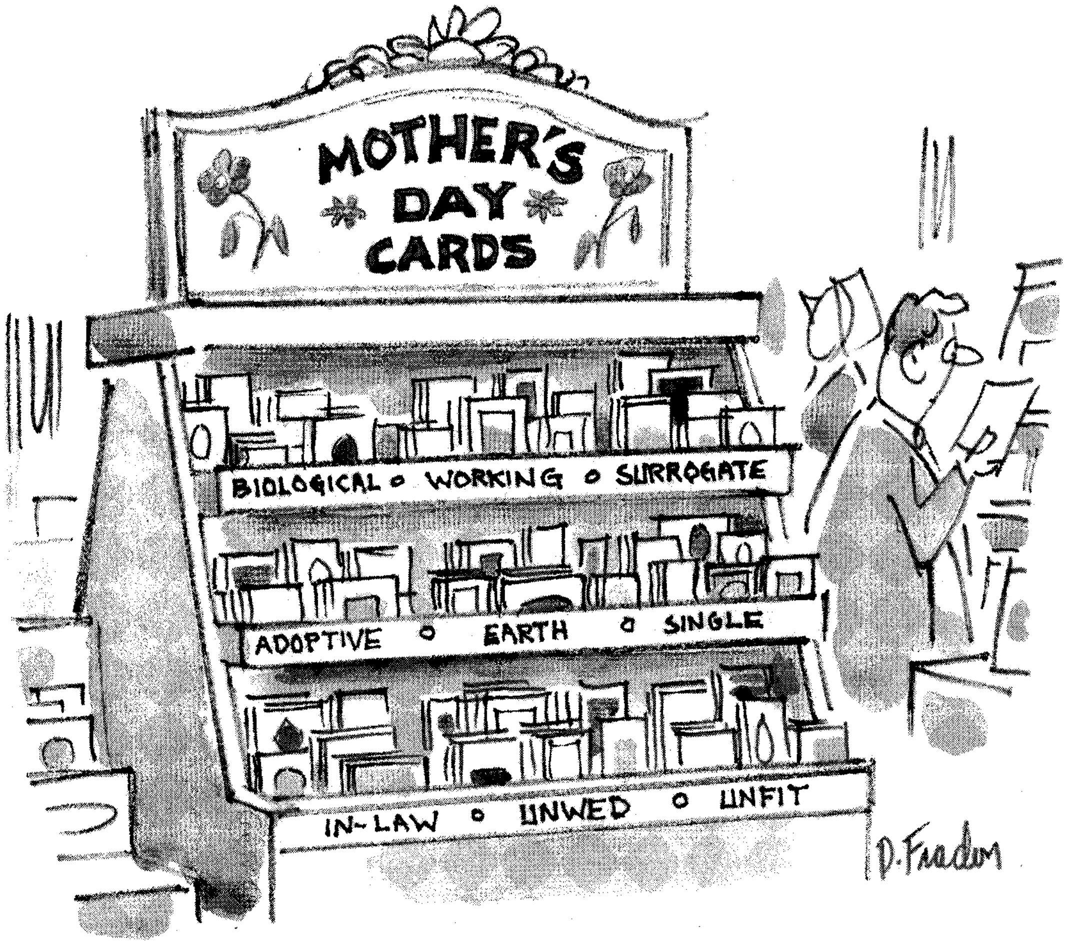
The argument that taggants might lead investigators to suspect an innocent person—someone who, say, bought the explosives but didn't build the bomb—is particularly ridiculous. By the same logic, automobile registration ought to be abolished because criminals sometimes use stolen getaway cars. (The trooper who fortuitously arrested Timothy McVeigh pulled him over because his vehicle had no tags.) In truth, taggants, like tags, and unlike some of the other antiterrorism measures proposed in recent days, threaten no one's civil liberties. Taggants would simply help police go after criminals once they'd committed a crime.

What the N.R.A. is really worried about is that putting taggants in explosives might be the first step down the slippery slope to putting taggants in bullets—an equally good idea. Ballistics experts have long used the unique markings left by the grooves in a gun barrel—its "rifling"—to match a bullet with the gun that fired it. Tagging bullets would have the further advantage of enabling investigators to link a bullet with its point of purchase, and perhaps with its purchaser. Bullets are often all that's left at the scene of a crime, since criminals usually take their guns with them.

Representative Charles Schumer, the energetic and capable Brooklyn Democrat, who has been especially enthusiastic about putting taggants in explosives, has been pushing for funding to develop sophisticated ways of tracing bullets. Schumer's New York colleague Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan has put it this way: "Guns don't kill people. Bullets do." According to Moynihan, seventy million guns are currently floating around in the United States, but there's only about a four-year supply of bullets to go into them. His latest proposal includes ammunition taxes, higher licensing fees, and tough record-keeping by bullet manufacturers. Making the bullets traceable would be as efficacious as registering the guns, and would be far more politically feasible. Against the predictable opposition of the N.R.A., Moynihan has already had success in restricting the sale of some of the most lethal armor-piercing bullets. He has also introduced a bill to outlaw the notorious Black Talons, or so-called "cop-killers." Although the manufacturer withdrew these voluntarily in response to Moynihan's 1993 proposal to tax them stiffly, they remain in circulation. Colin Ferguson used them in the Long Island Rail Road massacre, and his taste for them is shared by McVeigh, whose concealed gun was loaded with Black Talons when he was arrested.

At the time of the London school explosion, silence typically enveloped such tragedies, so the victims are lost to media memory. In recent weeks, Americans have been simultaneously speechless and garrulous in their mourning. For those directly involved, or related to those involved, the tragedy in Oklahoma will last a lifetime, and the final acts will take place offstage, away from our inevitably fleeting curiosity. Grief is private. But injustice is not, and our collective outrage should now invite swift and peaceable legislative action.

—Sara Mosle



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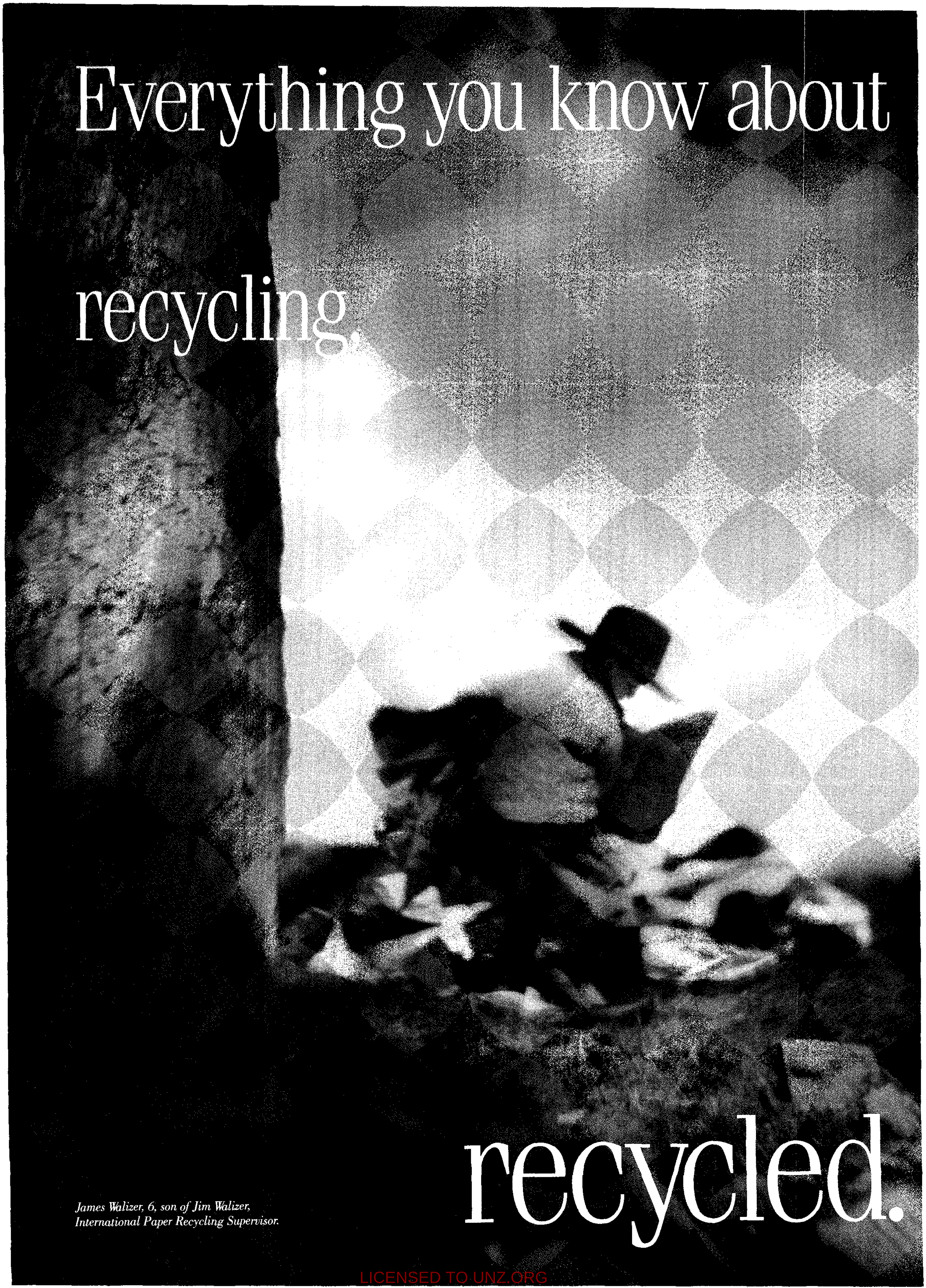
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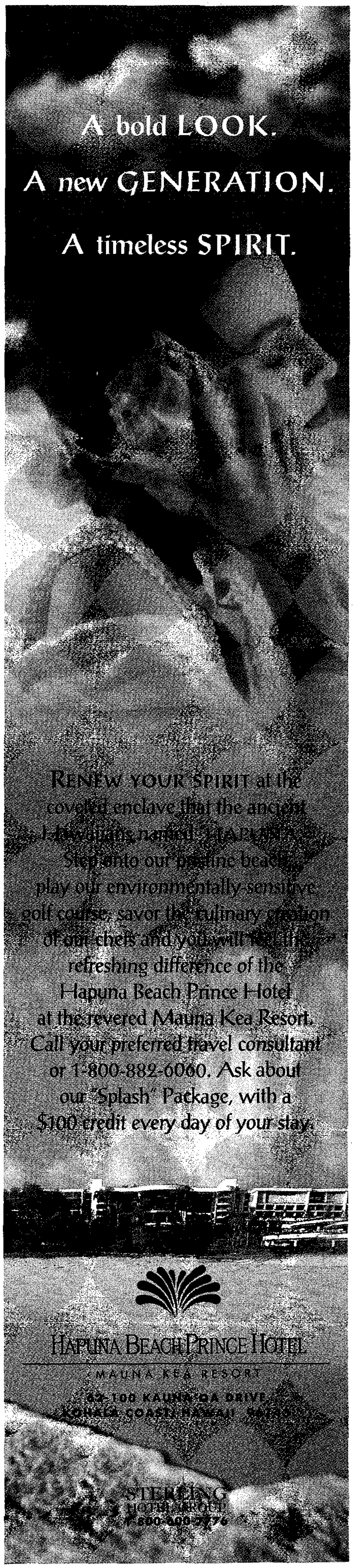
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IN THE MAIL

MOTHER EARTH

"Here Comes the Sun," by Gregg Easterbrook (Dept. of Disputation, April 10th), goes too far in declaring an age of environmental optimism. A peregrine falcon flying over a restored toxic-waste dump, water that is finally clean enough to crawl back into, air that doesn't require a gas mask to breathe: all this is good, but we should not become complacent about our small success. Rather than declare ourselves environmental optimists, we must assume the role of environmental guardians, keeping the memory of the environment's destruction in mind as we revel in its slow healing.

BRAD G. GARBER
Portland, Ore.

Mr. Easterbrook's revelation that liberal environmentalism has had a "stunning success" reflects a stunning lack of regard for the relevant facts. Especially misleading is his citation of limited American environmental gains to counter claims of global deterioration, with no discussion of offsetting losses. The United States occupies only about six per cent of the earth's terrestrial surface, and any semblance of stability in American forests is dwarfed by the ravages taking place elsewhere. Globally, two-thirds of the intact natural-forest cover that once existed is now gone. That's a stunning environmental success?

But perhaps the most inexcusable mistake in Easterbrook's essay lies in the glib opposition he creates between what he calls "doomsday" views and "optimism." It's a dichotomy that makes no logical sense. To be a real optimist means having the courage to acknowledge real problems, because that's a prerequisite to solving them. According to Harvard's Pulitzer Prize-winning biologist E. O. Wilson, human activities are now condemning tens of thousands of species to extinction each year. How long can this continue without triggering collapses of whole ecosystems, upsetting the balances that maintain agricultural and human health, and wreaking a real doomsday? Ecologists like Wilson, by meticulously describing what must be done to reverse our degradation of the planet, implicitly demonstrate their faith that a reversal is possible. It is they—the very people Easterbrook labels as doomsayers—who are the true optimists.

ED AYRES
Worldwatch Institute
Washington, D.C.

Mr. Easterbrook sees the proverbial glass as half full. Environmentalists see it as sometimes containing lead or cryptosporidium, a potentially deadly bacteria. They are both right. Twenty-five years ago, there were parts of this country in which the rivers were literally on fire. There can be no question that since then we have made substantial progress in protecting our environment. The air is more breathable, the water more drinkable, and our natural resources better protected. But there is also no question that we need to finish the job. It is true that current laws often provide too much process and not enough protection. But rather than seeking to improve these laws through reform, the new majority in Congress is essentially abandoning them to be rewritten by industry lobbyists, who are now involved in almost every stage of environmental legislation except the final vote. Perhaps that's next.

It is up to the Senate to stop this onslaught. At the risk of sounding like a "stylish pessimist," I think it is fair to say that our environment's future hangs in the balance.

AL MEYERHOFF
Natural Resources Defense Council
San Francisco, Calif.

With daily reports of crashing fisheries, disappearing forests, a crumbling Antarctic ice shelf, loss of species, unsafe drinking water, intractable urban air pollution, swelling stockpiles of nuclear waste, and soaring skin-cancer rates, it is comforting to learn from Gregg Easterbrook that continued concern about the state of the environment is based solely on the misplaced pessimism purveyed by those nefarious liberal Democrats.

Unfortunately, however, such a Panglossian view is unsupported by the facts. While there has been substantial progress as a result of the landmark environmental statutes passed since the first Earth Day, we are still far from achieving their goals. For every example of environmental success cited by Easterbrook there are at least as many examples of delay and failure. For instance, our rivers may not be flammable anymore but neither are many of them fishable or swimmable, as the Clean Water Act requires.

We do have a right to be proud of our environmental progress. We would be foolhardy to be smug about it.

PHILIP SHABECOFF
Greenwire News Service
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DEPT. OF AMPLIFICATION

In a Comment on the Oklahoma City bombing ("Violence as Style," May 8th), I took a swipe at Norman Mailer for what I called his "praise" of "two kids for killing a candy-store owner"—which might be read to imply that Mailer approved of an actual murder by actual kids of an actual store owner. I had in mind a passage in "The White Negro" (1957) in which Mailer writes that such an act, "no matter how brutal," would be "not altogether cowardly." In the context of Mailer's essay, though, it's clear that he is referring to a purely hypothetical murder, as part of a thought experiment, in the midst of a section devoted to examining styles of psychopathic violence. Murder still seems to me altogether cowardly even when it's hypothetical, but I'm persuaded that Mailer was trying to make a subtler and more complicated point than my summary version of it suggested.

ADAM GOPNIK
New York City

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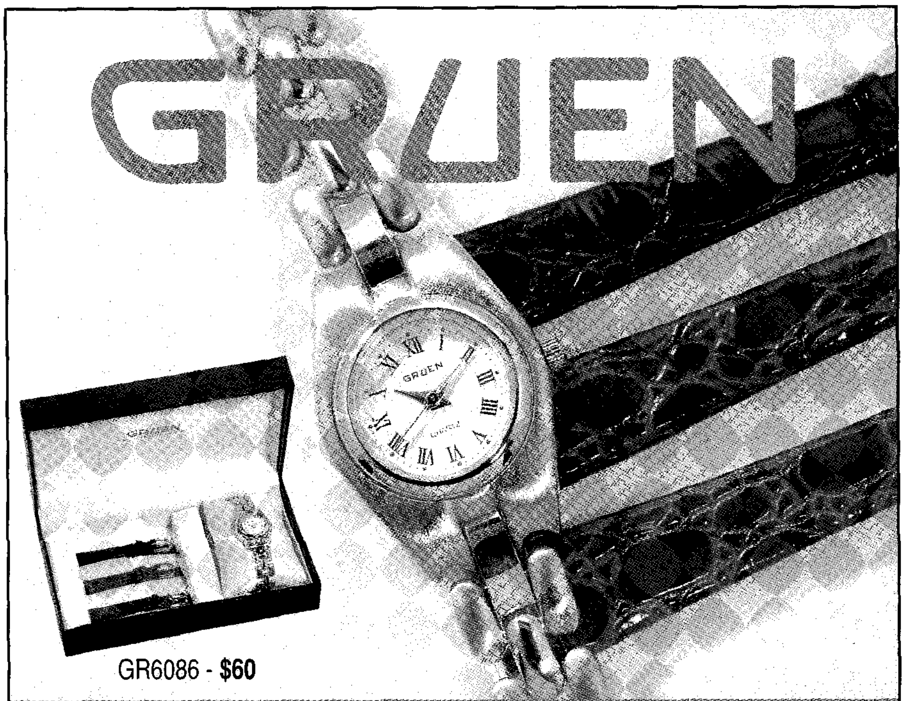

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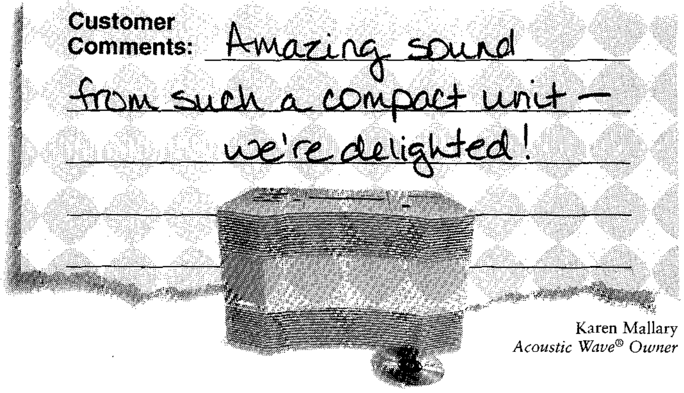

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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THE THEATRE

Package Deals

HAVING trouble coping with the flurry of recent openings? Let us suggest a few theme groupings to suit a variety of moods:

THE ENGLISH-ACTORS PACKAGE starts boldly, with a "Hamlet" in which Ralph Fiennes and London's Almeida Theatre turn the tragedy into a Victorian melodrama. Then it's downtown for Giles Havergal's crowd-pleasing adaptation of Graham Greene's "Travels with My Aunt," performed by an all-male cast of four. "A Month in the Country," with the risk-taking Helen Mirren, wraps up the tour. "Month" could also be part of:

THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY PACKAGE, the rest of which is brought to you by Lincoln Center Theatre. Tom Stoppard's "Arcadia," which seesaws between Byronic and modern-day England, is, hands down, the best new play in town, even if the vast expanse of the Vivian Beaumont has left some people grumbling about inaudibility. You'll have no complaints about "The Heiress," with its evocation of Henry James's New York; or about its star, Cherry Jones, *who may seem like a new* arrival but is familiar to regular theatregoers; or about Jones's costumer, Jane Greenwood, whose work leads us to:

THE RED SILK PACKAGE, which showcases Greenwood's red silk gown for Jones in "The Heiress," her red silk dress for Mirren in "A Month in the Country," and Catherine Zuber's red silk shirt for Anthony LaPaglia in "The Rose Tattoo." Broadway tickets may not be cheap, but in these shows, at least, you can see where the money's going.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

AFTER-PLAY—Anne Meara's play, recently seen at Manhattan Theatre Club, is in previews at a new venue, with Ms. Meara in a starring role, along with Barbara Barrie, Larry Keith, and Merwin Goldsmith. Previews through May 14. Opens May 16 at 8. (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 239-6200.)

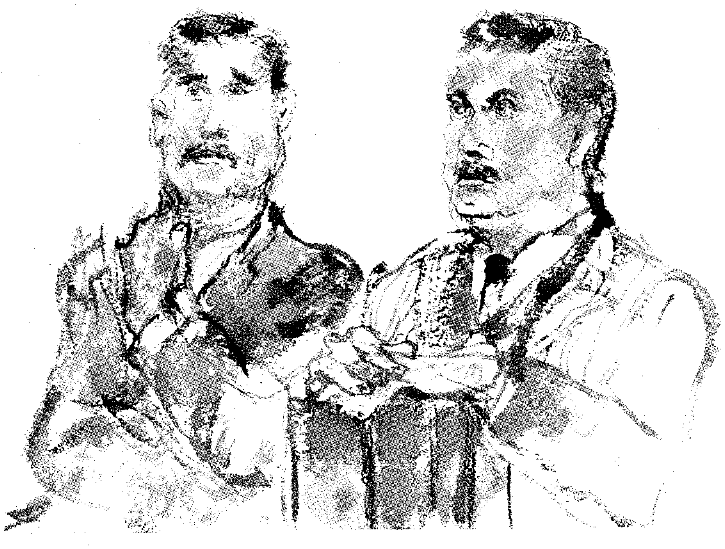
ANGEL LEVINE—A musical set in late-forties Harlem, about a Jewish tailor who has difficulty accepting his black guardian angel. Presented by the Jewish Repertory Theatre. Based on a work by Bernard Malamud. Previews through May 14 matinée. Opens that night at 7. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000.)

COMING THROUGH—The director, Wynn Handman, adapted the script for this production from interviews with immigrants who came to America in the twenties. Previews through May 13. Opens May 14 at 8. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 840-3074.)

THE DONAHUE SISTERS—Alma Cuervo, Terry Donnelly, and Carolyn McCormick play siblings reuniting at their family's ancestral home in Ireland, in this play by Geraldine Aron. Nye Heron directed. In previews through May 10. Opens May 11 at 8. (Irish Arts Center, 553 W. 51st St. 757-3318.)

FORTUNE'S FOOLS—A comedy about dating, love, and marriage in the Generation X set, by Frederick Stroppel. In previews. (Cherry Lane Theatre, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020.)

LOOSE LIPS—A comedy revue, featuring the National Transcript Players, based on official and secret records of spoken blunders by the Prince of Wales, Clarence Thomas, President Clinton, and other public figures. Previews begin May 10, with Harry Shearer as the first in a series of guest narrators. (The Triad, 158 W. 72nd St. 799-4599.)



Jim Dale and Brian Murray, in "Travels with My Aunt."

DEBORAH ROSS

LUST AND COMFORT—In this production about long-term relationships and desire, Peggy Shaw plays a rich American cross-dresser who moves to London to begin a new life as a man. Lois Weaver is her seductive servant. Opens May 11 at 10 and runs through May 27. (La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710.)

PARTY—Seven gay men spend an evening playing an elaborate truth-or-dare game, in a comedy written and directed by David Dillon. Previews through May 10. Opens May 11 at 8. (Douglas Fairbanks Theatre, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.)

POLICE BOYS—Playwrights Horizons presents Marion McClinton's new play, about the repercussions on a city police precinct when a fourteen-year-old gang member is arrested for rape and murder. Previews through May 13. Opens May 14 at 7:30. (416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

PRISONER OF LOVE—The New York Theatre Workshop presents an adaptation of Genet's last novel, with music by Philip Glass. Joanne Akalaitis directed. Previews begin May 12. (79 E. 4th St. 302-6989.)

THE PROFESSIONAL—Fritz Weaver is a retired policeman and Jonathan Hogan is a publisher in this work by Dusan Kovacevic, which is set in an Eastern European publishing house. In previews through May 10. Opens May 11 at 8. (Circle Repertory Company, 159 Bleecker St. 239-6200.)

SHABBATAI—A new musical by Michael Schubert and Michael Edwin, about the false Messiah of the seventeenth century; starring Maggi-Meg Reed. In previews. (American Jewish Theatre, 307 W. 26th St. 633-9797.)

SYLVIA—A. R. Gurney's new play, directed by John Tillinger, stars Blythe Danner, Sarah Jessica Parker, Charles Kimbrough, and Derek Smith. In previews. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

TWELVE DREAMS—James Lapine wrote and directed this play, inspired by a case study from Carl Jung's "Man and His Symbols." Previews begin May 11. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center, 239-6200.)

2—Romulus Linney's portrait of Hermann Goering, set in 1945, when Hitler's No. 2 man was on trial in Nuremberg. With Clarence Felder as Goering. Thomas Bullard directed. Previews begin May 10. (Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. 333-4052.)

OPENED RECENTLY

ALL ABOUT STEVE: MUSINGS OF AN EBONY QUEER—In his new solo work, Stephen Patterson takes a comic look at growing up gay, black, and liberal. (Grove Street Playhouse, 39 Grove St. 923-9300.)

AMPHITRYON—Those myths have staying power. Eric Overmyer's colloquial adaptation of the story of Alcmena—whom Jupiter tricks into thinking he's her husband, Amphitryon, and who ends up giving birth to Hercules—is based on Kleist's reinterpretation of Molière's version, and it's still not the least bit stale. The witty director, Brian Kulick, and his very funny cast pull off a spirited production that combines the best elements of all the previous incarnations. (Classic Stage Company, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210.)

ARCADIA—Despite some casting glitches, the American première of Tom Stoppard's 1993 play, which shuttles back and forth between 1809 and the present, is an elegant production of an enormous theatrical feat. In a kind of intellectual mystery story, Stoppard provides the audience with the exhilarating illusion of omniscience, allowing us to solve a riddle of history from clues and connections that the characters, caught in time, do not see. Directed by Trevor Nunn. (Reviewed in our issue of 4/17/95.) (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

THE COMPLEAT WORKS OF WLLM SHKSPR (ABRIDGED)—This slapstick hour-and-a-half romp through the Bard's œuvre, carried out by

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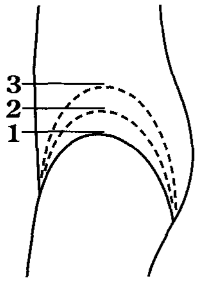

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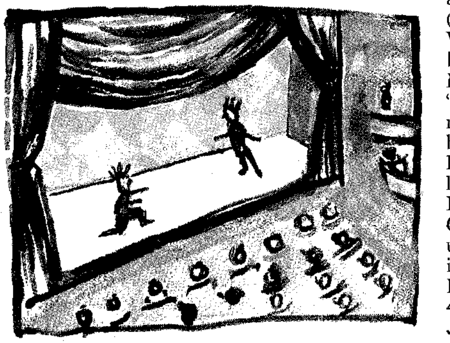
three fine young gentlemen in high-tops, is utterly sophomoric and a complete waste of time—like some of the best things in life. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

The Cryptogram—David Mamet's new play, which dramatizes a child's emotional abuse from the child's point of view, ranks with his best work and leaves an enormous aftershock. The actors in this excellent production are Ed Begley, Jr., Felicity Huffman, and Shelton Dane; Mr. Mamet directed. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)



Damn Yankees—Jerry Lewis, the King of Comedy and the King of France, is now, in his Broadway début, the Prince of Darkness—the Devil himself. The old pro delivers the goods. And Charlotte d'Amboise, a sensational Lola, delivers the goods and then some. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

Death Defying Acts—Three subpar one-act comedies, by David Mamet, Elaine May, and Woody Allen, that have the words "Written to Order" stamped all over them. (3/20/95) (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

Dog Opera—In Constance Congdon's new comedy, Kristine Nielson and Albert Macklin portray a pair of insecure city dwellers looking for love. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 260-2400.)

Ecstasy—Mike Leigh's play is set in a dismal North London flat in the winter of 1979, and like some of his movies it has the kind of grungy bed-sitter realism in which light bulbs are always bare and the top sheet never matches the bottom one. The late-seventies costumes and set are depressingly perfect, and the actors bring the six working-class characters to life with great specificity and vitality. (Smokeophobes take note: the theatre is tiny, and there's a whole lotta smokin' goin' on.) (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

Extraordinary Measures—James Lecesne stars in a new musical-theatre work, written and directed by Eve Ensler, about a gathering at a dying man's bedside. William Harper wrote the music. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 647-0202.)

The Hairy Ape—The Wooster Group's workshop production of Eugene O'Neill's 1922 drama, with Willem Dafoe and Kate Valk. (Performing Garage, 33 Wooster St. 966-3651. Closes May 14.)

Hamlet—Ralph Fiennes is the Prince of Denmark in a production brought to our shores by London's Almeida Theatre. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Belasco, 111 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Having Our Say—Sadie and Bessie Delany, two sisters who have passed the hundred-year mark and have made a home together for three-quarters of a century, presented their vivid life stories in a 1993 best-seller; the book has been adapted beautifully from the page to the stage by Emily Mann, who also directed. Gloria Foster and Mary Alice are brilliant as the sisters, who, taught by their family to "reach high" despite the dogging of Jim Crow, became a teacher and a dentist. The show is both a portrait of a remarkable relationship and an unsentimental depiction of service, accomplishment, and pride. (4/24/95) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

The Heiress—A revival of Ruth and Augustus Goetz's 1947 adaptation of Henry James's "Washington Square," directed by Gerald Gutierrez. Cherry Jones, who plays the title character, is exquisitely—almost unbearably—vulnerable. And the wonderful Frances Sternhagen is touching and funny as a widowed aunt. (3/20/95) (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying—In this revival of Frank Loesser's 1961 musical, Matthew Broderick, as the ambitious window-washer J. Pierrepont Finch, has polish and good timing, but he doesn't have the crazy gene that makes a musical star. Lillias White's gospel solo in "Brotherhood of Man," however, lifts the audience into a zone of joy; as a paradigm for the Broadway musical's con game—winning the public's heart while picking its pocket—her display of guile made glorious is as good as it gets. (4/24/95) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

Indiscretions—The first Broadway staging of "Les Parents Terribles," the 1938 play by Jean Cocteau. Kathleen Turner, Eileen Atkins, Roger Rees, Jude Law, and Cynthia Nixon make up the cast. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

James Lecesne's Word of Mouth—The actor's remarkably varied solo show. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

A Language of Their Own—Chay Yew, a twenty-nine-year-old Singaporean playwright, makes his New York début with this drama about two gay Asian-Americans in Boston who break up and go on to form new relationships. Yew uses words that are plain and simple to get at love's rich complications, especially the way the past persists in the present. Three "M. Butterfly" alumni—B. D. Wong, Francis Jue, and Alec Mapa—and David Drake make up the cast. (5/8/95) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 260-2400. Closes May 28.)

The Last Girl Singer—A former movie star makes a fresh start as a cabaret singer, in Deborah Grace Winer's new comedy. With Kelly Bishop, Bill Tatum, and Charlotte Maier. Charles Maryan directed. (Kampo Cultural Center, 31 Bond St. 765-1706.)

London Suite—Neil Simon knows how to cater to his audience, but in this follow-up to "Plaza Suite" and "California Suite" he's serving leftovers: the four one-acts are painfully dated in both their substance and their execution. The main pleasure in this production, which marks Simon's first-ever foray into the wilds of Off Broadway, is Carole Shelley, who provides some much needed comic muscle tone. Also with Paxton Whitehead, Kate Burton, and Jeffrey Jones. Daniel Sullivan directed. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-4100.)

Love! Valour! Compassion!—The eight gay men in Terrence McNally's beautifully written drama connect in ways that almost any nuclear family would envy. Under the nimble direction of Joe Mantello, the actors present humbling evidence of what love is and can be. (11/14/94) (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

A Month in the Country—Turgenev's play, set on a Russian estate in the eighteen-forties, is a tale of selfishness and self-delusion in the sphere of love. As Natalya Petrovna, the central character, Helen Mirren leaves no aspect of middle-aged romantic foolishness unplumbed. It's a breathtakingly funny performance, well supported by those of Ron Rifkin and F. Murray Abraham. Scott Ellis directed. (5/8/95) (Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

My Thing of Love—Infidelity is the subject and Laurie Metcalf is the star of Alexandra Gersten's new play. Also with Tom Irwin, Sheila Kelley, and Mark Blum. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Night and Her Stars—Moviegoers who have seen "Quiz Show" will experience an unpleasant déjà vu watching Richard Greenberg's play about the nineteen-fifties game-show scandals. It's even harder the second time around to stomach Charles Van Doren as a tragic hero. By the time Greenberg tries a fresh angle, in the second act, it's too late—you're already fretting that Ralph Fiennes is just around the corner, playing Hamlet. Presented by Manhattan Theatre Club. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 239-6200. Closes May 28.)

The Only Thing Worse You Could Have Told Me . . .—Dan Butler offers a procession of characters from the real world of contemporary gay culture, moving seamlessly from one monologue to the next in a perceptive one-man show that is by turns hilarious, infuriating, sad, and uplifting—a charmer. (Actors' Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 307-4100.)

Phaedra—Elizabeth Egloff's version of the Greek myth, directed by Evan Yionoulis. (Vineyard Theatre, 108 E. 15th St. 353-3874.)

Rob Becker's Defending the Caveman—A hundred-minute standup routine. Some of Becker's examples of discontent between the sexes are very funny (a lot of vigorous nodding goes on in the theatre—never by men and women at the same time), but a fair number of them are shopworn. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 307-4100.)

The Rose Tattoo—Mercedes Ruehl and Anthony LaPaglia star in a forty-fifth-anniversary production of Tennessee Williams' drama. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

Show Boat—Harold Prince's epic-size production of the 1927 Jerome Kern–Oscar Hammerstein II musical: full of life and full of vision. (10/17/94) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

Smokey Joe's Café—The Songs of Leiber and Stoller—A feast of early rock and roll, performed by a cast with Grade A lungs and legs. (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.)

Sunset Boulevard—Glenn Close continues her triumphant run as Norma Desmond. (12/5/94) (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 307-4007.)

Swingtime Canteen—A re-creation of a 1944 U.S.O. concert, performed in a night club. Extraneous bits of plot threaten to derail the show, but the lovely songs, done with verve and charm, carry the day. (Blue Angel, 321 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Too Jewish?—Avi Hoffman sets about reviving Yiddish—with music—in this revue, a mixture of songs and stories. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

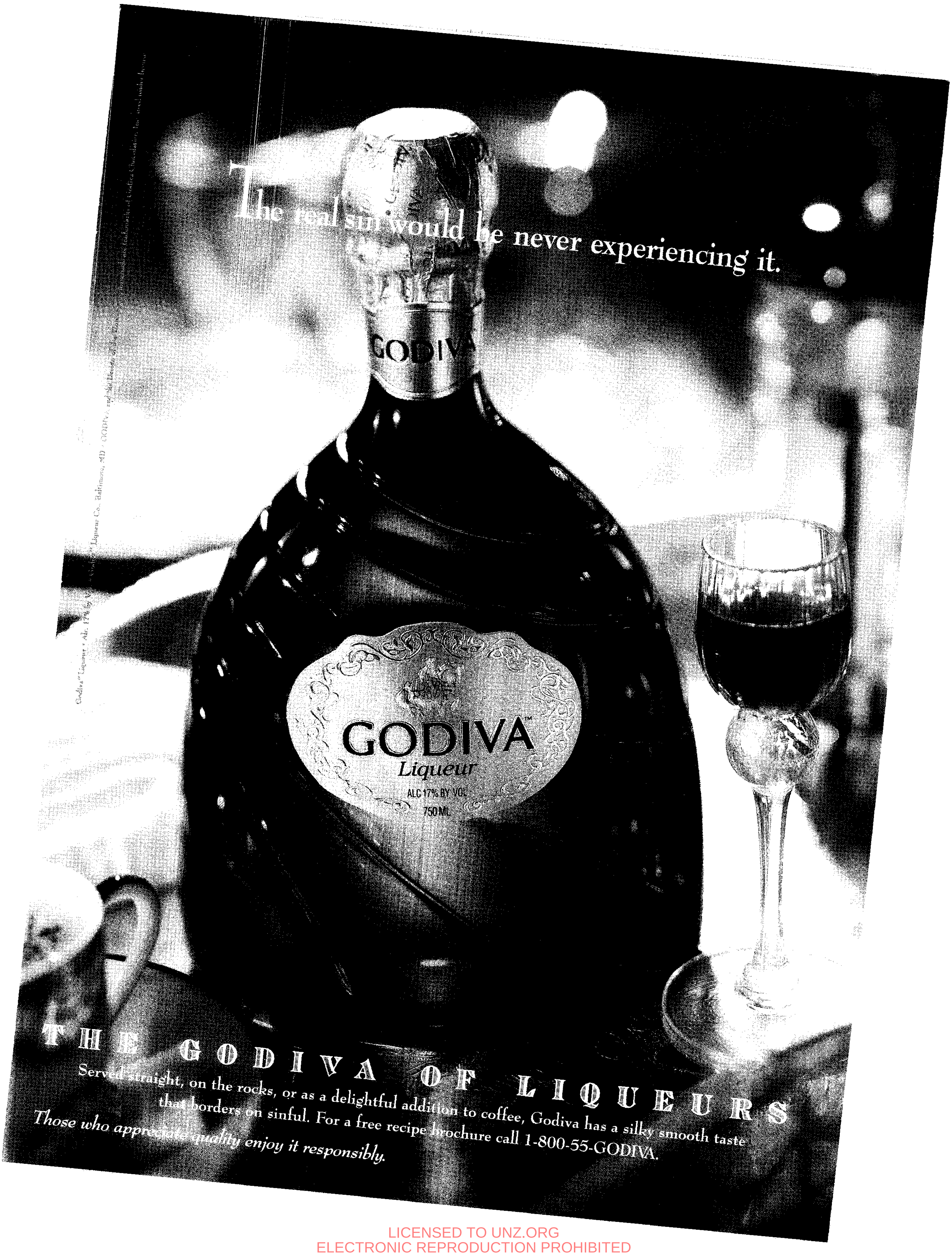
Travels with My Aunt—Giles Havergal, directing his own witty adaptation of Graham Greene's novel, has captured the book's amusingly puzzled tone with his playful, inventive (though overlong) staging. Four wildly different actors—Brian Murray, Jim Dale, Martin Rayner, and Tom Beckett—all play Henry Pulling, the staid retired banker whose eccentric Aunt Augusta drags him into her international adventures. Dale doubles as Aunt Augusta, and the other three skillfully handle some twenty additional parts, large and small, ranging from a Cockney cabdriver to an Irish wolfhound. The jowly, growly Murray impersonating a teen-age girl is a sight to behold. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane. 420-8000.)

Yepeto—A comedy by the Argentine playwright Roberto Cossa opens the twenty-ninth-anniversary season of the Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre. Performances in Spanish alternate with ones in English. (304 W. 47th St. 354-1293. Closes May 14.)

LONG RUNS

ALL IN THE TIMING: John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200. . . . **BEAUTY AND THE BEAST:** Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP / TUBES:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CRAZY FOR YOU:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **GREASE!:** Eugene

KATE SHEPHERD



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O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200. . . . **AN INSPECTOR CALLS:** Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **JACKIE MASON: POLITICALLY INCORRECT:** Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **JELLY ROLL:** Kaufman, 534 W. 42nd St. 307-4100. . . . **KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN:** Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **PERFECT CRIME:** Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **STOMP:** Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477. . . . **THREE TALL WOMEN:** Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 239-6200. . . . **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING:** St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 279-4200. . . . **THE WHO'S TOMMY:** St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.

DANCE

New York City Ballet—May 10 at 8: "Square Dance," "Huoah," "Episodes & Sarcasms," and "Western Symphony." . . . ¶ May 11 at 8: "Ash," "Dances at a Gathering," and "Western Symphony." . . . ¶ May 12 at 8: "Chaconne," "Afternoon of a Faun," "Antique Epigraphs," and "The Four Seasons." . . . ¶ May 13 at 2: "The Four Temperaments," "Beethoven Romance," "Ash," and "Dances at a Gathering." . . . ¶ May 13 at 8: "Donizetti Variations," "Huoah," "Episodes & Sarcasms," and "Chaconne." . . . ¶ May 14 at 1: "Monumentum pro Gesualdo / Movements for Piano and Orchestra," "Red Angels," "Mozart Piano Concerto," and "Western Symphony." . . . ¶ May 14 at 7: "Episodes," "Afternoon of a Faun," "Antique Epigraphs," and "I'm Old Fashioned." . . . ¶ May 16 at 8: "Mozart Piano Concerto," "Chiaroscuro," "Red Angels," and "Chaconne." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through June 25.)

American Ballet Theatre—May 10 at 2 and 8: "La Bayadère." . . . ¶ May 11 at 8: "Airs," "States of Grace," and "Theme and Variations." . . . ¶ May 12 at 8: "Airs," "States of Grace," and "Gaîté Parisienne." . . . ¶ May 13 at 2: "Airs," "Cruel World," and "In the Upper Room." . . . ¶ May 13 at 8: "Theme and Variations," "How Near Heaven," and "A Brahms Symphony." . . . ¶ May 15 at 8: "Airs," "Cruel World," and "Gaîté Parisienne." . . . ¶ May 16 at 8: "Les Sylphides," "A Brahms Symphony," and "In the Upper Room." (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000. Through June 17.)

Parsons Dance Company—Former Paul Taylor dancer David Parsons brings his ten-member troupe to the Joyce for some upper-echelon collaborations: with pianist Billy Taylor and his trio, for "Step Into My Dream"; with painter Alex Katz, for "Mood Swing: Prozactic Variations"; and with composer Richard Peaslee, for "Ring Around the Rosie," a piece about the fourteenth-century plague. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. May 10-12 and May 16 at 8, May 13 at 2 and 8, and May 14 at 7:30. Through May 21.)

Mimi Garrard Dance Theatre—The company, which is known for technological experimentation (computerized lighting, film, slide projection, etc.), is beginning its fourth decade. Its three-week engagement concludes with "Walking on Gravel" (1990), "Oasis" (1993), "Exchange" (1984), and "Renderings" (1995). (Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. 864-2929. May 12-13 at 8 and May 14 at 3.)

Phoebe Neville Dance Company—Two works: an untitled première and "Ear/Body," an improvisational collaboration with percussionist Philip Corner. (St. Marks In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 674-8194. May 11-14 at 8:30.)

NIGHT LIFE

CONCERTS

Harry Connick, Jr.—Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. May 10-11 at 8.

Beastie Boys—Who knew, when they were fighting for their right to party back in '86, that their fusion of hip-hop and slacker chic was setting the stage for artists like Beck and Luscious Jackson? The Boys' 1994 album "Ill Communication" showed that while their persona remains pubescent, their understanding of punk and funk values continues to mature. With the Jon Spencer Blues Explosion. (Nassau Coliseum. 1-516 794-9300. May 11 at 8.)

TABLES FOR TWO

Dining around town

Table d'Hôte, 44 E. 92nd St. (348-8125)—A mere ribbon of floorboard divides the nine tables of Table d'Hôte, which is surely the smallest restaurant in Carnegie Hill. Sixteen years ago, chef and owner Vivek Bandhu jammed the spoils of a thousand antiquing trips into the storefront, and if you glance in as you pass, you may think you're seeing a miniature English National Trust parlor. But when you stop in to eat, you discover that things aren't so stiff. The plates don't match, and the tables are united only by the taste of *l'hôte.* That's "hôte," not—definitely not—"haute."

Which isn't to suggest that there's a problem with the food, as long as you don't mind risking a visit from the cholesterol police. Nor is it the food's fault that a lot of it gets left behind. That's a consequence of diners who, dressed in their Upper East Sidery and accessorized with their Eloise-style offspring, have no qualms about ordering all three courses, even though they've had big lunches at the Palm. A true table d'hôte offers no choice whatsoever. Here, in contrast, there are choices galore, from seared sesame-soy tuna to giant fatty lamb shanks on sandlots of orzo (although several dishes have been known to feature the same tomato, white bean, and garlic foundation). Could it be all the calories burned in straining toward a decision which makes everyone order dessert? More likely it's the Tahitian vanilla ice cream. (Open daily for lunch and dinner; the kitchen closes at 10:30. Entrées $16-$22.)

Dorothy Donegan—Now in her seventies, Donegan can still scare your pants off with her wild, free-associative piano discourses. She'll try anything, even the impossible, interpolating classical themes into Tin Pan Alley, slinging off Tatum volleys, and romping through stride passages when the spirit moves her. It's on-the-edge stuff. With George Melly. (Pace Downtown Theatre, Spruce St. between Nassau and Gold Sts. 346-1715. May 11 at 8.)

Spyro Gyra / Hiroshima—Low-fibre jazz. (Beacon Theatre. May 12 at 8.)

Altan—It's difficult to imagine traditional Celtic music sounding any more vital. Formed in the late eighties by Belfast-born flutist Frankie Kennedy (who died last fall) and his wife, the Donegal fiddler and heart-melting singer Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh, the Dublin supergroup has set new standards for Irish music. (Considering that this is a field that, like bluegrass, takes excellence for granted, that's nothing to shake a shillelagh at.) "The First Ten Years: 1986-95," Altan's new record, on a wonderful little Connecticut label called Green Linnet, finds the group, as always, refusing to stand pat while there are new jigs, reels, and mazurkas to conquer. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. May 12 at 8.)

Aashish Khan / Zakir Hussain—Playing sarod and tabla. (Town Hall. May 13 at 8.)

Linda Ronstadt—Every up-and-coming female country singer has borrowed stylistic touches that she perfected decades ago (when Nashville wouldn't touch her with a ten-foot lasso), but the only place you're likely to hear Ronstadt these days is the cultural exile of soft-rock radio. Having flitted from operetta to standards to Mexicali music over the past decade and a half, on her shimmering new album, "Feels Like Home," she glides effortlessly from the Carter Family to Randy Newman to Neil Young—the still-fertile turf of her youth. At forty-eight, she remains the quintessential American singer of her generation. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. May 13 at 8.)

"Speak to My Heart"—Lavender Light, a forty-member choir, presents an evening of gospel tunes. (Tribeca Performing Arts Center, 199 Chambers St. 346-8510. May 13 at 8.)

Ruth Brown / Jon Hendricks—Taking her cues from gospel and swing, Brown developed a lithe, intuitive style of R. & B. singing. The definitive collection of her work is a 1989 anthology titled "Miss Rhythm," and it's got the right name. Hendricks was studying law at the University of Toledo in the fifties when Charlie Parker played a gig with him and declared, "You are not a lawyer, you are a jazz musician. Quit school and come to New York." He did. (Davis Hall, City College, Convent Ave. at 14th St. 650-7100. May 14 at 3.)

Allman Brothers Band—When they started out in 1969, the Allmans already seemed like a troop of battle-scarred veterans. Which is why, despite the periodic feuding, splinter groups, and devastating deaths, these grizzled midnight riders are still soldiering on. Before anyone unfurled the Southern-rock banner, the Allmans were juggling blues and jazz—two musical forms known for resilience. This six-night stand finds them on the warmup side of one of their endless tours; it seems that the road does indeed go on forever. (Radio City Music Hall. May 14-20 at 8.)

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type indicates some of the more notable performers in town. Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it is advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Through May 14: vocalist **JULIE BUDD** is in the Oak Room. Dining.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Through May 14: the **BOB JAMES** band with **KIRK WHALUM.** The **SADAO WATANABE** quartet and **MICHEL PETRUCCIANI** swing by on May 16. Dining.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A duskily lit neighborhood bar, where pianists, bassists, and, occasionally, drummers compete for your ear. Truth and beauty usually prevail. Through May 13: piano and bass with **JOHN HICKS** and **CURTIS LUNDY.** Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, window-

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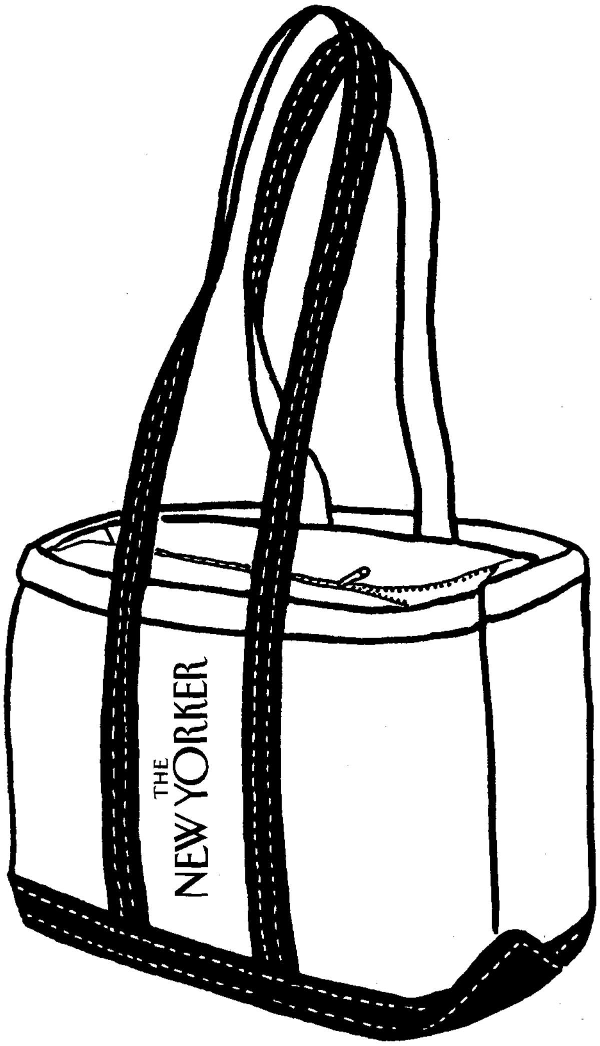

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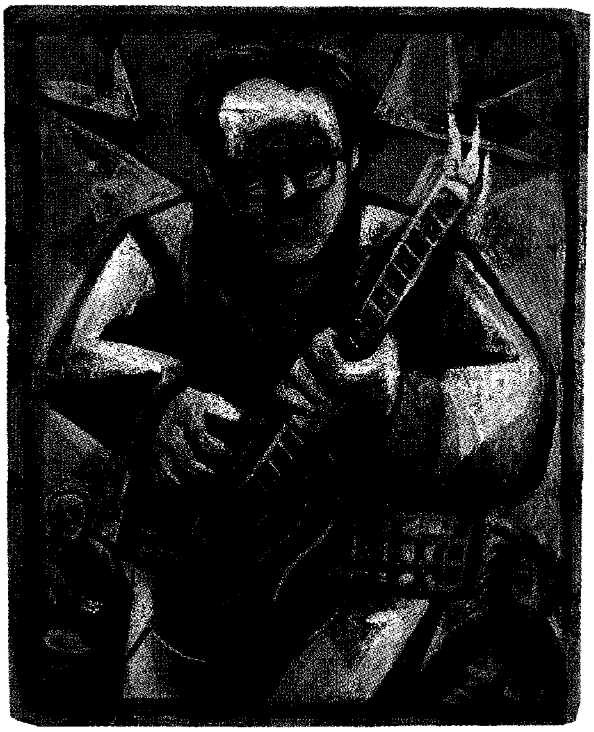
less enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound pastel murals, and, through June, the great **BOBBY SHORT.** Time has not diminished the tasteful virtuosity of Short's ivory-tinkling, nor has it taken the edge off his gregarious wit as a singer and showman. A fixture at the Carlyle, he can still spin an Ira Gershwin lyric with all the sophistication, humor, and pathos it deserves. Also well served are gems by Duke Ellington, Dorothy Fields, Irving Berlin, and, of course, Cole Porter. A de-lightful, de-lovely evening. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar, **BARBARA CARROLL** is in attendance.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7900)—Through May 14: the **BENNY GOLSON** quartet. Boasting a brawny tone, full-throttle energy, and impeccable credentials, tenor saxophonist Golson is a genuine hard-bop hero. He's also one of the greatest of all jazz composers, with at least three classics to his name: "I Remember Clifford," "Whisper Not," and "Stablemates." Guitarist **HERB ELLIS** takes over on May 16. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL** leads a trio. Dining.



Bill Frisell, at the Village Vanguard.

RUSSELL CHRISTIAN

Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—**MOSE ALLISON,** who plays here May 13, is still making the world safe for pissed-off musical anomalies over sixty. Slamming the piano like Jimmy Yancey possessed by Monk and Bartók, Allison is nothing less than a national treasure. The **MINGUS BIG BAND** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

Fifty Seven Fifty Seven, 57 E. 57th St. (758-5757)—A sleek piano-and-bass room in the Four Seasons Hotel. Thursdays through Sundays, **DONALD JOHNSTON** is the featured pianist; on Fridays and Saturdays he performs with a trio. Dining.

Iridium, 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—Across the street from Lincoln Center, this restaurant and club features a handsome bar upstairs and a surreal performance space downstairs. Through May 14: the **DONALD HARRISON** quartet. Harrison was one of the first of the New Orleans jazz expatriates of the early eighties. With his plangent tone, rootsy feel, and pedal-to-the-floor momentum, he's emerged with honors. Guitarist **LARRY CORYELL** grabs a handful of strings on May 16. Dining.

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—An Old New York kind of place, with dark wood panelling, white tablecloths, and brass figurine lamps. May 10-13: bass and piano with **PAUL BROWN** and **WALTER BISHOP, JR.**

Match, 160 Mercer St. (343-0020)—This hip SoHo *boîte* is the place to be every Sunday night, thanks to the **SHORTY JACKSON LEGACY BLUES BAND,** featuring the eighty-nine-year-old **LAUREL WATSON.** Dining.

Metropolis, 31 Union Sq. W. (675-2300)—A swank basement club, home to high-profile jazz combos. **NORA YORK** sings on May 10. Tuesdays are given over to the **GEORGE GEE ORCHESTRA,** a seventeen-piece swing band.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000)—The great cabaret in the sky. **MARY CLEERE HARAN** (in through late May) uses her smile not to wow the room but to light her songs. Unlike many jazz-cabaret singers, she knows how to use dynamics, and sometimes she pulls her quick, ruffled vibrato up short, like Anita O'Day. She also loves to talk, and some of her monologues can become pocket essays, but she's witty and she has an appealing sotto-voce giggle, and you know that the next song, like love, is just around the corner. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in the Rainbow Room, there's a revolving dance floor, plus swinging big-band music courtesy of the Rainbow Room Orchestra, featuring vocalists Michael Andrew and Claudette Sierra. Closed Mondays.

Smalls, 183 W. 10th St. (929-7565)—This aptly named club features up-and-coming players jamming late into the night.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A convivial and crowded jazz club where the musicians are always top-shelf. Through May 14: the **SONNY FORTUNE** quartet. The **OLIVER LAKE** quintet takes over on May 16. An electrified big band belonging to trumpeter **MILES EVANS** is in action on Mondays. Dining.

Tavern on the Green, Central Park W. at 67th St. (873-3200)—**JIMMY SCOTT** is here through May 14. With good reason, the singer has dropped the "Little" that used to front his name—there's nothing diminutive about his talent, and he can count Madonna and Ray Charles among his admirers. Even on songs you've heard dozens of times before, Scott makes you listen for the next lyric as if it were a password to love and happiness. Dining.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Through May 14: **BILL FRISELL.** With his terrific salute to the music from the films of Buster Keaton, the thinking man's guitar hero is enjoying a career high. He says more with space and silence than most fretmen convey with an avalanche of notes. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays.

Visiones, 125 Macdougal St., at W. 3rd St. (673-5576)—May 10-13: The **JAMES WILLIAMS** quartet. May 16: The **TED NASH** quartet. Dining.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A rarity among jazz clubs: somewhere you'd go to eat even if there were no music. May 14: **MICHAEL MOORE** and **CHRIS POTTER.** Bassist Moore is joined by Potter, an exuberant, broad-minded young saxophonist.

ROCK, ETC.

Academy, 234 W. 43rd St.—May 16: **PAVEMENT.** Last year's "Crooked Rain, Crooked Rain" was full of jagged arrangements, self-flagellating lyrics, and guitars that sounded as if they had been recorded over vacuum cleaners—all of which made Pavement the definitive band for the generation known as X. The band's new record, "Wowee Zowee," is besotted with angst, but singer Stephen Malkmus has a knack for wrapping despair in a simple K-tel melody. With **COME.** (For concert information, call 307-7171.)

A.K.A., 77 W. Houston St., at Wooster St. (673-7325)—May 13: **BIM SKALA BIM.**

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—May 11: Producer-songwriter **DON DIXON** and the hot country duo called the **DELEVANTES.** May 12: Songwriter **GUY CLARK.** May 16: **CHRISTINE LAVIN.**

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—A narrow, graffiti-strewn cave packed every evening with new and used bands. May 11: **JACK LOGAN,** whose forty-five-song album "Bulk" chronicles a fifteen-year career. . . . ¶ Next door, the neat and comfortable testament to gentrification called CB's Gallery plays host to **ACOUSTIC BLUE** on May 12.

The Cooler, 416 W. 14th St. (229-0785)—A lavender and stainless-steel vault deep in the heart of the meat district. May 13: Funk with the **GROOVE COLLECTIVE.** Tuesday nights are given over to experimental d.j. spinoffs.

Continental Divide, 25 Third Ave., at St. Marks Pl. (529-6924)—Hipsters, punks, poseurs, N.Y.U. students, the occasional skinhead—a typical East Village bar. Live music nightly.

Don Hill's, 511 Greenwich St. (219-2850)—A tidy little SoHo bar with an above-average P.A. system and top-notch local bands on the docket. Friday night is Squeeze Box, a vinyl-and-velvet gay glamfest, hosted by Mistress Formika.

Irving Plaza, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—May 12: **THROWING MUSES.** Former member Tanya Donelly may get all the attention for her own group, Belly, but the Muses' gripping new record, "University," far surpasses those of Belly and of most other alternative-rock poster children in potency and inventiveness. Led for more than ten tumultuous years by the pixieish singer Kristin Hersh (who says that her songwriting is guided by voices in her head), the Muses shift between guitar mayhem and swirling, otherworldly realms. May 16: **SPONGE.** . . . ¶ Soul Kitchen, the original seventies funk and R. & B. party, goes down (late) every Tuesday. . . . ¶ The Swing Dance Society gathers here every Sunday. The dancers share a passion for the Lindy Hop, a dance that involves a lot of whirling and the occasional display of underwear. Sets from eight until midnight. For information on the society, call 696-9737.

Kaptain Banana, 101 Greene St. (343-9000)—French cabaret *en travesti* in SoHo. Three drag queens and eight dancers re-create the Court of Versailles, a carnival in Rio, Marlene Dietrich, and the Andrews Sisters. There's also a singing gorilla. Dining.

Knitting Factory, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—May 11: **ALLEN GINSBERG** recites. May 16: **PHILIP GLASS** plays solo piano.

Limelight, Sixth Ave. at 20th St. (807-7850)—The rock-and-roll church. May 10: **NANCY SINATRA.** Thanks to a recent bootless appearance in *Playboy,* Frank's little girl is hot on the comeback trail. She performs in the fin-de-siècle blowout known as Disco 2000.

Maxwell's, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken (1-201 798-4064)—Romance awaits! Meet your date at the World Trade Center and hold hands on the PATH as it burrows its way under the Hudson to Hoboken, the burg that gave the world baseball and Ol' Blue Eyes. May 10: **ROSIE FLORES.**

Mercury Lounge, 217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—May 10-11: The **BOGMEN.** May 14: **PAUL CEBAR & THE MILWAUKEEANS.** May 15: Singer-songwriter **LORI CARSON.**

Nell's, 246 W. 14th St. (675-1567)—A Victorian-style club, home to an eclectic crowd of downtown youngsters dancing to throbbing funk and techno-pop. Monday night is Funky Buddha, with live bands and d.j. Derek Corley "on the wheels."

Paddy Reilly's Music Bar, 519 Second Ave., at 29th St. (686-1210)—**BLACK 47** usually plays on Saturdays, and Speir Mor (Gaelic for Big Sky) performs for a hearty following on

Fridays. Séisiún—a traditional Irish jam—is on Thursday nights.

Les Poulets, 16 W. 22nd St. (229-2000)—The name may be French, but the music here is Latin: expect salsa, merengue, and the occasional cha-cha. May 13: ISIDRO INFANTE. Dining.

Rodeo Bar, 375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (683-6500)—Sunday evenings belong to the FLYING NEUTRINOS, a New Orleans jazz band led by cousins Ingrid Lucia and Todd Lundagin. Lucia's lowdown singing, sassy patter, and mischievous grin are a lot like Billie Holiday's, and Lundagin plays trombone, tap-dances, and has a disarming Chet Baker-style voice.

Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. (247-0200)—Ballroom dancing on Thursdays and Sundays. The rest of the week it's another dark, sweaty rock club. May 12: Those lovable neo-Deadheads BLUES TRAVELER. With XANAX 25. May 13: FAITH NO MORE returns from grunge exile. May 15: An all-acoustic evening with the CRANBERRIES, MATTHEW SWEET, ADAM ANT, and the HUMAN LEAGUE.

S.O.B.'s, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great grass hut with a fruit-and-bamboo motif, dedicated to calypso, reggae, and the bossa nova. Thursday nights belong to Giant Step, a roving collective of musicians, rappers, and d.j.s who mix jazz, funk, and hip-hop. Dining.

Tramps, 51 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—This spacious and agreeable club offers a consistent lineup of blues greats. May 12: The SKADANKS. May 13: The BLASTERS.

Webster Hall, 125 E. 11th St. (353-1600)—A byzantine disco wonderland with four floors, a coffee shop, and a wig boutique. Wednesday is drag night. Psychedelic Thursdays feature grunge acts and cheap beer.

Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—MILO Z funks up this vast environmentally friendly club on May 12.

ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"Art and Empire: Treasures from Assyria in the British Museum" includes immense stone reliefs with court, battle, and hunting scenes, small ivory carvings, embossed bronze bowls, and clay tablets with cuneiform script, all dating from the ninth to seventh centuries B.C. . . . ¶ Another show of Assyrian antiquities, these excavated at the site of Ashur, on the Tigris River, comes from the Vorderasiatisches Museum, in Berlin. . . . ¶ Portraits of George Sand, Delacroix, Baudelaire, Berlioz, and a very young Sarah Bernhardt are among those on view in an exhibition of works by the master photographer Nadar (Félix Tournachon, 1820-1910). Through July 9. . . . ¶ "The Seven Deadly Sins," a suite of paintings by Paul Cadmus, is at the center of a small show of his works (another of which is "The Eighth Sin: Jealousy"). . . . ¶ "An Egyptian Bestiary," a large non-petting zoo of falcons, baboons, hippos, and ibis, in stone, ivory, gold, bronze, and wood. . . . ¶ The Costume Institute has come up with a fresh take on the traditional spring flower show: in "Bloom: Fashion's Spring Gardens," one wanders among stands of gowns, blouses, and waistcoats adorned with tropical exotica, blue-blood roses, black *fleurs du mal*, and a host of other flora. . . . ¶ "R. B. Kitaj," a retrospective of more than seventy paintings by the American expatriate who for nearly four decades has lived and worked in London. Through May 14. . . . NOTE: The museum's roof garden is open, when weather permits. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—"Bruce Nauman." A massive exhibition that shows off the artist's talent for avoiding a signature style while conveying, again and again, his signature emotion: nameless dread, expressed with inscrutable equipoise. While a few years ago there was evidence of a satiric sensibility, even of a puritan conscience, in his austere mobiles of broken cast-wax animal bodies, his dead-end-corridor installations, and his large neon pieces, in this show there is a relentless and exhausting unhappiness. Through May 23. . . . ¶ "Masterworks from the Louise Reinhardt Smith Collection," thirty-six paintings, drawings, and sculptures by, among others, Kandinsky, Picasso, Monet, Seurat, Braque, Degas, Moore, and Rodin. . . . ¶ Tom Friedman's deadpan sculptures are the subject of the current "projects" show. A self-portrait has been carved from a regular-sized aspirin tablet; other pieces incorporate bubble gum, spaghetti, and dust. Through May 18. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays and Fridays, noon to 8:30.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—A Ross Bleckner retrospective treats us to liberal helpings of the painter's familiar stew of sublimity and kitsch—the work of a soul profoundly divided between the raptures of a mystic and the whimsies of an interior decorator. Much of it is sickly gorgeous; some of it betrays a deep spiritual longing. Through May 14. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6, and Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

Guggenheim Museum SoHo, 575 Broadway—A selection of Gary Hill's video installations. Starts May 11. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6, and Saturday evenings until 8.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—The 1995 Biennial exhibition. (Open Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; and Fridays, 11 to 9, with no

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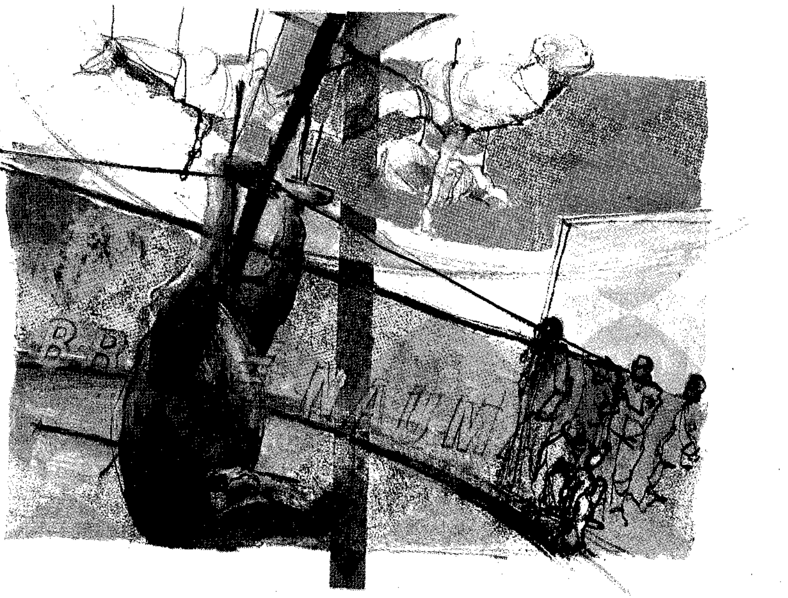


The Bruce Nauman retrospective, at MOMA.

RICCARDO VECCHIO

admission charge after 6 and live music and performances in the lower gallery.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—"The Pictographs of Adolph Gottlieb," a series of sixty gridded paintings with Native American, Freudian, Joycean, and other imagery, in free-associative compositions. . . . ¶ The museum has impressively reinstalled its African holdings. The art works and artifacts span a millennium and encompass scores of cultures. Much is beautiful, and much is familiar, but it's the weirder stuff that really catches the eye—for example, a gilt "linguist staff" from Ghana. Linguists were high-ranking advisers to the king of the Fante tribe, and they carried such staffs in royal processions. This one is topped by figures that illustrate the Fante proverb "It is only a foolish mouse that tries to get into the cat's bag." Words to live by. . . . ¶ "A Graphic Odyssey: Romare Bearden as Printmaker." Through July 9. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Bard Graduate Center, 18 W. 86th St.—"Arthur J. Stone: Master Silversmith," a comprehensive survey of the presentation silverware, ecclesiastical commissions, and meticulously crafted tableware made by the immigrant from Sheffield who set up shop in 1901 in Gardner, Mass. Through May 14. . . . ¶ More vase, goblet, bowl, and tea-service masterpieces, by another Sheffield native, Omar Ramsden. Through May 14. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5, and Thursday evenings until 8:30.)

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—"Romantics, Neoclassicists, Realists: European Drawings from the Stanford University Museum of Art" includes works from the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by Fragonard, Turner, Delacroix, Fuseli, and others. Through May 14. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St.—"Gems of the Floating World," seventy flawless examples of ukiyo-e, the highly stylized wood-block prints of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Kitagawa Utamaro's "House Cleaning in the Palace," a four-foot-long tour de force, shows three samurai stumbling back after a night of drinking while the maids at home are tidying up; as an instance of perfectly composed chaos, the swirling, antic composition rivals anything in Poussin. Through June 4. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—"Camille Pissarro: Impressionist Innovator" includes many of the artist's landscapes, figure paintings, family portraits, and Japonism-inspired design experiments. Through July 16. . . . ¶ "Women Photographers of the Weimar Republic," late-twenties and thirties works by Lucia Moholy, Lotte Jacobi, Hannah Höch, Florence Henri, and others. Through July 30. . . . ¶ Lithographs by El Lissitzky, woodcuts by Max Weber and Luis Camnitzer, and prints by Marc Chagall are on display in "Tricksters, Tailors and Fools: Yiddish Tales Through Artists' Eyes." Through July 30. (Open Sundays through Thursdays, 11 to 5:45; Tuesday evenings until 8.)

Museo del Barrio, Fifth Ave. at 104th St.—"Reaffirming Spirituality," the third exhibition in the series "Artists Talk Back: Visual Conversations with El Museo." In every installment, participating artists have each chosen a work from the permanent collection to display alongside one of their own. Among the current thirty-four are Cándida Alvarez, Carlos Gutiérrez Solana, George Crespo, and Jaime Davidovich. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 5; Thursdays, noon to 7.)

Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum, 32-37 Vernon Blvd., at 33rd Road, Long Island City—Now open for its tenth season, this museum, with its twelve galleries and peaceful, ivy-walled center garden, is an oasis for more than two hundred and fifty of the artist's sculptures and lanterns. (Open Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Josef Albers (1888-1976)—Paintings and rare works on paper from his "Homage to the Square" series. Through June 2. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

Richard Estes—Photorealist paintings of New York City, with views from a Fifth Avenue bus, the Staten Island ferry, and the Williamsburg Bridge. Through June 3. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Lawrence Gipe—A suite of oils based on "approved images" from the Third Reich—idealistic photographs of bucolic landscapes and gleaming factories, which expressed the Nazis' vision of a Teutonic utopia. The painting is competent, but the artist has pasted on a stale postmodernist gimmick: Barbara Krugeresque captions at the bottom of the canvases, which quote empty phrases ("Profound Knowledge of a Tragic Destiny," "Essential Character of a People") from Nazi propaganda. National Socialism is too big a subject to tackle if you have nothing to say. Through May 27. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

Arshile Gorky (1904-48)—Thirty-nine drawings from the early thirties that show his developing abstract vocabulary. Through May 26. (Mazoh, 67 E. 93rd St. Open Mondays, closed Saturdays.)

Philip Guston (1913-80)—If you don't love Guston's abstractions from the fifties—and love them rapturously—you're just not looking hard enough. This mini-retrospective from the artist's great decade crescendos from cool, understated near-monochromes to massive, shifting forms in boldly contrasting colors. A velvety explosion in rose and tangerine (on loan from MOMA), magically combining serenity and complexity, is alchemy in pigment. Through June 3. (McKee, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Alfredo Jaar—An installation on the subject of Rwanda comprises rows, stacks, and grids of sealed black archival-photograph boxes, each of which contains an 8 x 10 photo taken in that country. A description of the picture is silkscreened onto the front of each box. Through June 17. (Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St.)

Ray Johnson (1927-95)—A memorial exhibition for the artist, who committed suicide in January: many of his collages (including early, proto-Pop examples), documentations of Conceptual performances (which he called "nothings"), and pieces of "mail art"—thousands of business envelopes containing collages and photocopies related in cryptic ways to their recipients and meant to be added to and sent on to someone else or returned to the artist. Through June 16. (Feigen, 49 E. 68th St.)

Joyce Kozloff—Pretty maps of exotic places, from Bombay to Istanbul to Los Angeles, made of collaged drawings and ceramic tiles. Busy and seductive, and overlaid with decorative arabesques, they attempt to penetrate the psyches of the people who made each city. Somehow pink glitter for Port-au-Prince seems just right. Through May 13. (Midtown Payson, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Odd Nerdrum—This Norwegian artist, a student of Joseph Beuys, has distilled three hundred and fifty years of European painting into big, portentous canvases that favor a sunset palette of rose and gold: a startlingly Rembrandtesque self-portrait in Biblical raiment; a horrifying murder scene with a grisly quotation from Caravaggio's "Medusa"; a surrealist vision of a man contemplating a severed head, in the dreamy, evocative mode of Odilon Redon. There's something comforting in the knowledge that so skilled a painter can still mine the mother lode of the Western tradition. Through May 26. (Forum, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Lorraine Shemesh—Seven- and eight-foot-long paintings of pool swimmers, by an artist who has a strong facility for rendering refracted light and underwater perspective. Through May 27. (Stone, 113 E. 90th St.)

David Smith (1906-65)—Two shows, uptown and down. At Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.: "To and from the Figure" examines the artist's abstract, geometric, and surreal treatment of the nude in his sculptures, paintings, and drawings. Through May 20. . . . At Marks, 522 W. 22nd St.: Two skinny, totemic steel sculptures, one painted and the other stainless. A lovely suite of related tempera works is also on view. Through June 25. (Open Thursdays through Sundays, noon to 6.)

Short List—**LUIS CRUZ AZACETA,** Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St. Through June 2. . . . **BURGOYNE DILLER** and **CHARLES SELIGER,** Rosenfeld, 24 W. 57th St. Through June 3. . . . **CHARLES GARABEDIAN,** Hirschl & Adler Modern, 21 E. 70th St. Through June 9. . . . **KEITH HARING,** Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. Through June 9. . . . **ROBERT MOTHERWELL,** Long, 24 W. 57th St. Through June 3. . . . **JOHN NEWMAN,** McCoy, 41 E. 57th St. Open Mondays; through June 3. . . . **TOM WESSELMANN,** Janis, 110 W. 57th St. Through June 10. . . . **TIMOTHY WOODMAN,** Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through June 3.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

SOL LEWITT—"New Structures," a daunting series of mortared cinder-block towers at a suitably gargantuan gallery. With his faint pencil wall drawings and his lattice sculptures, LeWitt was one of the sixties progenitors of dematerialization. But in these dark, hulking, sublime works, he seems to be taking a leaf from Richard Serra's book. Through May 31. (Ace, 275 Hudson St. Opens at 1.)

OUATTARA—A young painter from the Ivory Coast whose mixed-media paintings/reliefs combine elements of traditional tribal culture with aesthetic strategies of Western avant-garde movements. Through June 10. (65 Thompson Street Gallery.)

NAM JUNE PAIK—A twenty-five-by-fifteen-foot video wall sculpture in the form of a map of the United States, with neon elements and video images from around the country. Also on view are a laser projection piece and an homage to Charlotte Moorman. Through June 3. (Holly Solomon, 172 Mercer St.)

ELLIOTT PUCKETTE—New paintings; in each one, a ribbonlike line, delicately etched in the black background, dances across the surface. Less cluttered than the artist's earlier works, they read like maps of the night sky. Through May 13. (Kasmin, 74 Grand St.)

RICHARD SERRA—"To Whom It May Concern" (1995) is the master of scary gigantism's latest monumental sculpture, and, unlike some of his other works, this one doesn't beat you into submission. Nine freestanding Cor-ten steel slabs, each twenty-two feet long and eight inches wide—only the heights are different—form an open, nonclaustrophobic labyrinth through which visitors can stroll. Through June 25. (Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. Open Thursdays through Sundays, noon to 6.)

GEORGE STOLL—A deliciously sensuous installation of colored beeswax-and-paraffin sculptures, based on Tupperware forms. Although Stoll acknowledges their campy provenance, he wrests a formal brilliance out of his unlikely models. Elegantly installed, the sculptures exhibit a spectrum of electric and pastel colors. And the beeswax smells divine. Through June 4. (Morris, 530 W. 22nd St. Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6.)

SHORT LIST—**MIQUEL BARCELÓ,** Castelli, 420 West Broadway. Through May 20. . . . **HERBERT BAYER,** Kent, 67 Prince St. Through June 3. . . . **PETER BOYNTON,** Merians, 76 Greene St. Closed Tuesdays; through May 27. . . . **MARK DI SUVERO,** Gagosian, 136 Wooster St. Through May 27. . . . **JIMMIE DURHAM,** Klagsbrun, 51 Greene St. Through May 27. . . . **ELAINE REICHEK,** Klein, 40 Wooster St. Through May 26. . . . **JOHN WATERS,** American Fine Arts, 22 Wooster St. Through May 20. . . . **TERRY WINTERS,** Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway. Through May 20. . . . **CHRISTOPHER WOOL,** Luhring Augustine, 130 Prince St. Through June 3. . . . **YUKINORI YANAGI,** Blum, 99 Wooster St. Through July 31.

AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

CHRISTIE'S—Paintings from the collections of Pamela Harriman and Fritz Nathan, among others. The apex comes on May 11, with the sale of Picasso's "Mother and Child" (1922) and portraits by Renoir, Matisse, and van Gogh. Aficionados of modernism should also check out the auction of the Ralph and Georgia Colin collection (May 10), which includes Modigliani's "Seated Nude with a Necklace" (1917) and Miró's "Poetess" (1940). (Park Ave. at 59th St. 546-1119.)

SOTHEBY'S—Pre-Columbian art from the recently disbanded Perls Galleries. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 606-7000. May 16.)

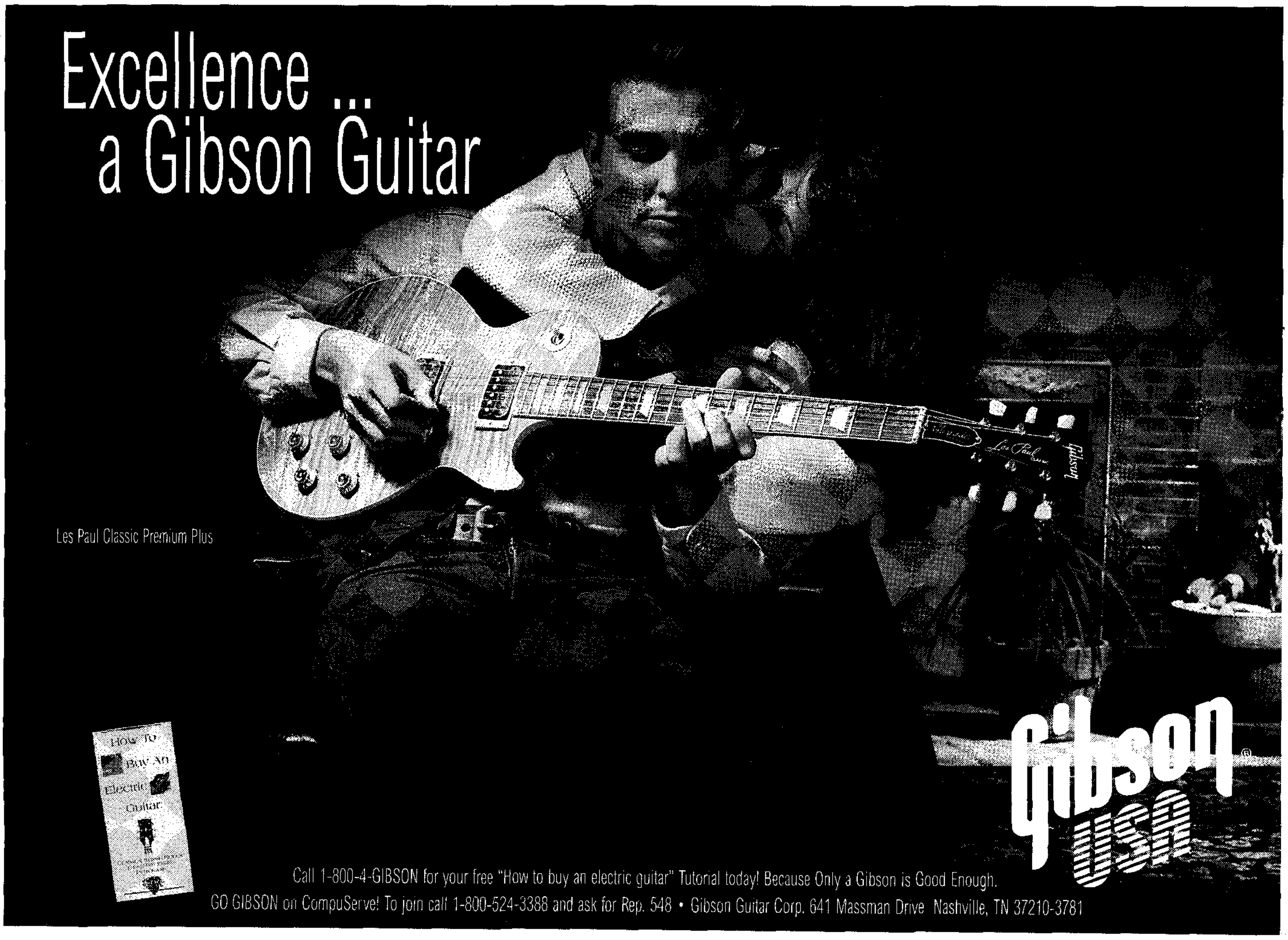
INTERNATIONAL FINE ART FAIR—Seventy-odd purveyors of paintings, drawings, and sculptures. (7th Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 66th St. May 12-16. For information, call 382-0969.)

BIBLIOPHILE ALERT—An auction of books on art and architecture. (Swann Galleries, 104 E. 25th St. 254-4710. May 11 at 10:30.). . . ¶ Antiquarian book fair. (Metropolitan Antiques, 110 W. 19th St. 463-0200. May 12-14.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

He Shoots, He Scores!

THE seventy-two-year-old sports photographer Robert Riger, who is being honored (at last) with a nice fat show at the Danziger gallery (130 Prince Street; through May 20), has shot electrically eloquent pictures of a hall of fame's worth of athletes and their games. His black-and-white photos from the fifties and sixties are as agile as their subjects, among them Willie Mays stealing third at Ebbets Field (the dust swirling, his cap flying like a Frisbee) and Wilt Chamberlain, down for a moment, on the parquet floor of the Boston Garden (long, long, long). Riger's photographs capture an event from all sides; his stadium shots catch the collective excitement so viscerally that you can almost smell it.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Tina Barney—New, funny, sometimes caustic pictures of the artist's family, this time loosely centered on couples. Through May 31. (Borden, 560 Broadway.)

Ruth Orkin (1921-85)—Candid photographs of celebrities and other subjects, including Leonard Bernstein at Tanglewood (from the forties), Montgomery Clift and Albert Einstein (fifties), and Central Park (sixties and seventies). Through July 16. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

Sebastião Salgado—The Yancey Richardson gallery's inaugural show is a sampling from the "Workers" series, images of harvesters, miners, builders, and haulers from many countries. Through May 27. (Richardson, 560 Broadway. . . . ¶ A large exhibition from the series is at the International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8. Through May 26.)

Jeff Wall—Six large Cibachromes, mounted in light boxes, of elaborately staged tableaux. Through June 10. (Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

New York School—Vintage urban landscapes, street scenes, and portraits by Louis Faurer, Lisette Model, Leon Levinstein, and Weegee. Through June 30. (Sander, 19 E. 76th St.)

Short List—**SALLY GALL,** Saul, 560 Broadway. Through May 20. . . . **BIRNEY IMES,** Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St. Through May 20. . . . **JEROME LIEBLING,** Gallery 292, 120 Wooster St. Through May 20. . . . **INGE MORATH,** Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. Through May 20. . . . **JAMES WELLING,** American Fine Arts, 22 Wooster St. Through May 20. . . . **JOEL-PETER WITKIN,** Pace-MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. Through June 24.

(See the museum listings for a photography exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Full Circles

WOLFGANG SAWALLISCH, who became the Philadelphia Orchestra's music director two years ago, entered the trade as a rehearsal pianist for an opera house, and opera has remained central to his career. Wagner and Strauss (a fellow *Münchener*) are his specialties: in 1957, at the age of thirty-four, he became the youngest conductor ever to mount the podium at Bayreuth—ten years after making one of his first forays into the form, as the pianist and harmonium player in Strauss's "Ariadne auf Naxos."

This month's four concert performances of "Ariadne" (one—on May 15—at Carnegie Hall, the other three in Philadelphia) are another milestone: the first time Sawallisch is conducting a complete opera in the United States. "This opera," he says, "is not only one of the most ingenious creations in the dramatic literature, it is also a peerless and unsurpassed demonstration of how cleverly one can present serious and comic on the stage side by side." It's appropriate that the Philadelphia Orchestra will be backing him up: Philadelphia was the site of the opera's American première, back in 1928.

(The box-office number for Alice Tully Hall is 875-5050; for Avery Fisher Hall, 875-5030; for Carnegie Hall, 247-7800; and for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719.)

OPERA

Concert Royal—The Baroque ensemble offers a concert performance of Purcell's opera "Dido and Aeneas" and Michel Pignolet de Montéclair's cantata "La Mort de Didon." James Richman directs. (Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. 355-6160. May 12 at 8.)

"Ariadne auf Naxos"—Wolfgang Sawallisch leads the Philadelphia Orchestra in a concert performance of Strauss's opera, featuring sopranos Mechthild Gessendorf and Jane Giering-De Haan, mezzo-soprano Ann Murray, tenor Gösta Winbergh, and baritone Eike Wilm Schulte; with English supertitles. (Carnegie Hall. May 15 at 8.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—André Previn conducts Debussy's "Prélude à l'Après-midi d'un Faune," Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 3 (with Gil Shaham), and Strauss's "Symphonia Domestica." (Avery Fisher Hall. May 11 and May 13 at 8; May 12 at 2; and May 16 at 7:30.)

Little Orchestra Society—Dino Anagnost leads seven concerti grossi by Vivaldi, four of them in Bach's transcriptions as keyboard concertos. (Alice Tully Hall. May 10 at 8.)

Oratorio Society of New York—Performing Vaughan Williams' "Dona Nobis Pacem," Brahms' "Nänie," and Fauré's Requiem; with soprano Ruth Golden and baritone Kurt Ollmann. Lyndon Woodside and Florian Hollard share the conducting duties. (Carnegie Hall. May 11 at 8.)

Riverside Choral Society—Patrick Gardner leads another performance of Fauré's Requiem, as well as Bernstein's "Chichester Psalms" and Janáček's "Otčenáš." (Church of the Heavenly Rest, Fifth Ave. at 90th St. May 11 at 8. For information about tickets, call 780-2181.)

Ascension Music Chorus and Orchestra—Performing Duruflé's "Messe Cum Jubilo" (in its rarely presented final orchestral version) and yet another Fauré Requiem, with soprano Beverly Myers and baritone Tony Dillon. Dennis Keene directs. (Church of the Ascension, Fifth Ave. at 10th St. 254-8553. May 15 at 8.)

RECITALS

Tokyo String Quartet—The ensemble completes its season-long survey of Beethoven's quartets by performing the A Major (Op. 18, No. 5), F Major (Op. 135), and C Major (Op. 59, No. 3). (Avery Fisher Hall. May 10 at 8.)

St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble—The group's "Second Helpings" series, which provides follow-up performances to auspicious premières, offers Jeffery Cotton's "Five Runic Songs," Dan Coleman's "Going to the Silent Place," and Cord Meijering's "Serenade III," as well as Hindemith's Scherzo for Viola and Cello. (Guggenheim Museum SoHo, 575 Broadway. May 10 at 8. For information about tickets, call 840-7470.)

New York Philomusica Chamber Ensemble—Performing chamber music for strings, by Dvořák (his Two Waltzes, Op. 54, No. 1), Webern (his Six Bagatelles), Ravel (his Sonata for Violin and Cello), and Brahms (his G-Major Sextet). (Merkin Concert Hall. May 10 at 8.)

Lauren Flanigan—The soprano, assisted by pianist Michael Recchiuti and other colleagues, recalls the legendary personalities and repertoire of the "Yellow Brick Brewery," the home of the Metropolitan Opera from its inception, in 1883, until its move to Lincoln Center, in 1966. (New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St. 873-3400. May 10 at 8.)

Bargemusic—Pianist Randall Hodgkinson and cellist Ronald Thomas perform Grieg's Cello

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Sonata; violinist Mark Peskanov joins them for piano trios by Haydn and Brahms (in C Major). (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. May 11 at 7:30 and May 14 at 4.)

Mannes / Helicon Historical Performance Symposium—On May 13-14, the Mannes College of Music and harpsichordist Albert Fuller's Helicon Ensemble team up for a weekend of master classes, lectures, and performances of Baroque music. The events conclude on May 14 at 8, with a recital of music by Rameau, Bach, Purcell, and others, featuring Mr. Fuller, soprano Julianne Baird, violinist Stanley Ritchie, and cellist Myron Lutzke. (For information about specific events, all of which will be held at or near the school's home, 150 W. 85th St., call 874-6438.)

Juilliard String Quartet—The ensemble performs quartets by Hindemith (his Second), Bartók (his Sixth), and Beethoven (in C Major, Op. 59, No. 3). (Alice Tully Hall. May 13 at 3.)

Beach Party—Though she steadfastly identified herself as Mrs. H. H. A. Beach, modern commentators call her Amy Marcy Cheney Beach, thus discouraging the perpetuation of the nickname that delighted her detractors: Mrs. Ha-Ha. Whatever you choose to call her, she has entered the history books as the first American woman composer—indeed, the first American-trained composer—to attract serious international notice. From the distance of a century, her principal works—such as her "Gaelic" Symphony (1896) and her Piano Concerto (1900)—aren't any more or less memorable than most mainstream American music of that time. Nonetheless, her facility is beyond reproach, and her historical importance is indisputable. A distinguished lineup of singers and instrumentalists offers a well-rounded look at her œuvre, including her Violin Sonata, a selection of songs and piano music, and a concert version of her one-act chamber opera, "Cabildo." (Alice Tully Hall. May 13 at 8.)

Guild of Composers—Presenting songs and chamber works by Mahler, Reger, Sean Varah, James Walsh, Jack Beeson, and Jacques-Louis Monod. (Weill Recital Hall. May 13 at 8:30.)

City Island Baroque Ensemble—A way-uptown concert series marks its second anniversary with performances of multiple-violin concertos by Bach and Vivaldi. (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. 1-718 885-2478. May 14 at noon.)

New York Philharmonic Ensembles—Members of the orchestra performing Bach's G-Major Trio Sonata (BWV 1038), Kodály's Duo for Violin and Cello, Stephen Rush's "Rebellion," and Schumann's Piano Quartet. (Merkin Concert Hall. May 14 at 3.)

Midtown Sounds—Warmer weather returns, and with it the free lunchtime chamber-music concerts in Bryant Park, now in their fourth season. Flutist Eugenia Zukerman and the Borromeo String Quartet launch the series by performing Mozart's D-Major Flute Quartet, Arthur Foote's "A Night Piece," and Debussy's String Quartet. (Sixth Ave. at 42nd Street. May 15 at 12:30.)

Double Edge—The piano duo of Edmund Niemann and Nurit Tilles, specialists in twentieth-century music, performs Feldman's "Two Pianos," Ives's "Three Quarter-Tone Pieces," Messiaen's "Visions de l'Amen," and the première of Steve Reich's "Short Piano Duo," among other works. (Merkin Concert Hall. May 16 at 8.)

Morten Zeuthen—Cellist, with pianist Amalie Malling, performing sonatas by Beethoven (his Second), Schnittke, and the nineteenth-century Danish composer Peter Heise, as well as Nielsen's "Fantasy Pieces." (Weill Recital Hall. May 16 at 8.)

LIZZIE HOLLEY

ALSO OF INTEREST

Lois Svard: In piano works by Robert Ashley, Alvin Lucier, Kyle Gann, and Elodie Lauten. (Merkin Concert Hall. May 11 at 8.) . . . **Charles Craig:** Pianist, in works by William Grant Still. (Prospect Park Picnic House, near Prospect Park W. and Third St., Brooklyn. May 11 at 8. Tickets at the door.) . . . **Amato Opera Company:** "The Marriage of Figaro," in English. (319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. May 12-13 at 7:30.) . . . **St. Cecilia Chorus:** Dvořák's Requiem, with David Randolph directing. (Carnegie Hall. May 12 at 8.) . . . **Canticum Novum Singers:** Harold Rosenbaum directs a Renaissance program. (St. Ignatius Episcopal Church, West End Ave. at 87th St. May 13 at 8. Tickets at the door.) . . . **New York Youth Symphony:** (Carnegie Hall. May 14 at 3. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 581-5933.) . . . **100th Street Chorale:** Schubert's G-Major Mass and Haydn's "Jugendmesse," among other works. (Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, 164 W. 100th St. May 14 at 3. Admission by contribution.) . . . **Suzanne Gilchrest and Winslow Browning:** Flutist and classical guitarist. (Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. 355-6160. May 14 at 4.) . . . **Salon Soirées:** Iris Regev and Inbal Segev play cello duets by Telemann, Schumann, and Ilan Rechtman (who assists at the piano). (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. May 14 at 6 and 8. No tickets necessary.) . . . **Sylvan Winds:** Music by Mozart, Joachim Raff, and Robert Baksa. (Weill Recital Hall. May 15 at 8.) . . . **Leonardo Trio:** Piano trios by Roberto Sierra, Villa-Lobos, and Fauré. (Americas Society, Park Ave. at 68th St. May 15 at 8. For information about tickets, call 935-6075.) . . . **Pro Musicis:** A thirtieth-anniversary celebration of this promoter of community concerts, with performances by pianist Byron Janis and many others. (Alice Tully Hall. May 16 at 8.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

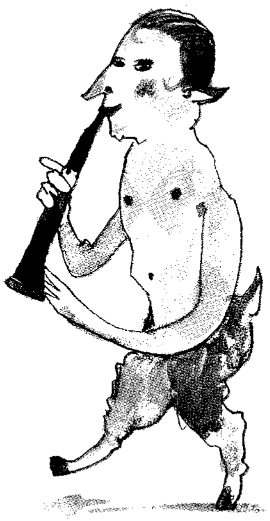
"Knock, Knock, Who's Bare?"—On Mother's Day, nearly every Broadway musical will be sending representatives down the runway at Palladium, to take off costumes that fall into the slim divide between glitzy and skimpy in the first place. The fastest fund-raising in the Broadway Cares / Equity Fights AIDS event comes when the audience is invited to stuff greenbacks into the dancers' G-strings; in previous years, the take from that one number has practically equalled the ticket proceeds. (126 E. 14th St. May 14 at 9:30. For more information, call 768-4329.)

International Festival of Lunch—Brown baggers in Bryant Park compete in a smorgasbord of luncheon categories: biggest, best homemade, most original, oldest still edible, longest sausage, etc. To enter, just show up on May 16, between noon and 2, ready to show off your feed bag to the judges. (Sixth Ave. at 42nd St. Rain date is May 18.)

BAM BAM—The Brooklyn Academy of Music presents a weekend of international children's entertainment. Kermit the Frog and his colleagues are honorary chairmuppets for the program, which brings in Cirque Éloize from Canada, Queen Ida and her Zydeco Band from Louisiana, Smala et Compagnie from France, world music from Eastern Europe and Puerto Rico, and a number of other acts for the global child. You can come for a particular event or buy a day's pass and stick around. (30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn. May 13-14, from 11 to 4. For more information, call 1-718 636-4100.)

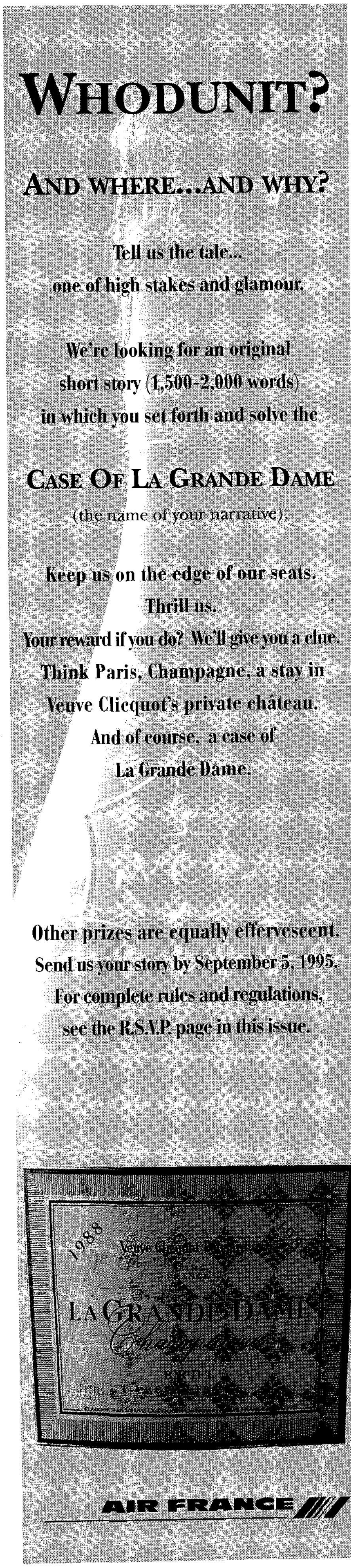
Mother's Day—Just a reminder. O.K., two reminders. May 13, from noon to 4: Kids make eighteenth-century-style gifts—embroidered handkerchiefs, handmade jewelry—in a Colonial workshop. (Fraunces Tavern Museum, 54 Pearl St. 425-1778. No charge beyond museum admission.) . . . ¶ The South Street Seaport Museum's exhibit "Devil's Blue: American Tattoo Art and Practice Through the Port of New York" includes several beautiful patterns, both historical and contemporary, for that Mom tattoo you've been considering. (207 Front St. 748-8600. Through October.)

Readings—May 14 at 3: As part of the NightLight for Kids series, novelist Patrick McGrath ("Dr. Haggard's Disease") retells "Pecos Bill" and "Johnny Appleseed," and monologuist Eric Bogosian ("Pounding Nails in the Floor with My Forehead") reads from Rudyard Kipling's "Just So Stories." (The Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ May 16 at 7: The Whitney assembles a Biennial selection of writers, including Lydia Davis ("The End of the Story"), Mary Gaitskill ("Bad Behavior"), William Gass ("The Tunnel"), and Darryl Pinckney ("High Cotton"). (Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. 606-0211.) . . . ¶ May 16 at 8: Poet and editor Jonathan Galassi introduces poets August Kleinzahler and Jim Powell, who will read from their work. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. For more information, call the Academy of American Poets, at 274-0343.)



Talks—May 11 at 12:30: Anthropologist Sherrill Wilson talks about black owners of black slaves. (Fraunces Tavern Museum, 54 Pearl St. No charge beyond museum admission.) . . . ¶ May 11 at 6: William Gibson, the cyberpunk novelist, and Pamela McCorduck, who writes about artificial intelligence, consider literary forms in the virtual age. (New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. For information about tickets, call 930-0571.) . . . ¶ May 15 at 6: Eleanor Dwight, Edith Wharton's biographer, shows slides of the gardens of The Mount, Wharton's Massachusetts estate, and weighs the author's assertion that she was a better landscape gardener than novelist. (National Arts Club, 15 Gramercy Park S. For reservations, call 677-9725.) . . . ¶ May 15 at 6:30: Architect Chuck Hoberman looks at lightweight domes, retractable roofs, and other shape-changing structures in a talk on kinetic architecture. (Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St. To register, call 860-6321.) . . . ¶ May 16 at 6:30: Amherst professor Antonio Benitez-Rojo traces the influence of African culture on the arts and religions of Cuba. (New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St. For reservations, call 366-6900, ext. 130.)

Tour—May 14 at noon: Big Onion Walking Tours samples the whole schmear—pickles, bialys, soppressata, dim sum, you name it—on its multiethnic Mother's Day culinary tour of the Lower East Side. For more information, call 439-1090.



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AIR FRANCE

THE MOVIES

FILMS OPENING THIS WEEK

Crimson Tide—Gene Hackman and Denzel Washington star in Tony Scott's submarine thriller. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) Opening May 12. (Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, Cinema I, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, Embassy 1, and Embassy.)

Dirty Money—An innocent bystander (Frederick Dean), caught in a Los Angeles payroll robbery, is chased through California and into Mexico by the thieves. Dean wrote the screenplay; James Bruce directed. Opening May 12. (Quad Cinema.)

Dreaming of Rita—In Jon Lindstrom's comedy, Per Oscarsson is a widower in search of the love of his youth, a Rita Hayworth lookalike. Written by the director and Rita Holst. In Swedish. Opening May 12. (Quad Cinema.)

The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill but Came Down a Mountain—A romantic comedy with Hugh Grant and Tara Fitzgerald. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) Opening May 12. (Village Theatre VII, 68th St. Playhouse, Chelsea Cinemas, and Lincoln Square.)

Ermo—A Chinese peasant (Alia) takes a second job, has an affair with her neighbor, and sells her blood, all in her quest to buy the biggest TV in the village. Directed by Zhou Xiaowen. In Mandarin. Opening May 12. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Eternity / Is That All There Is?—Two documentaries. The first, directed by Lawrence Johnston, concerns Arthur Stace, who spent forty years writing the word "eternity" in chalk on the streets of Sydney. The second is Lindsay Anderson's last film, a self-portrait he directed for BBC Scotland. Opening May 10. (Film Forum.)

Gordy—Country-music singer Doug Stone stars in a family comedy about a piglet who sets out to save his parents and siblings from the slaughterhouse and becomes a national celebrity. With Kristy Young, Michael Roescher, and Tom Lester. Directed by Mark Lewis. Opening May 12. (East 85th Street.)

A Little Princess—A wealthy Anglo-Indian ten-year-old (Liesel Matthews) is sent away to the strict Miss Minchin's School for Girls when her father (Liam Cunningham) is called up to fight in the First World War. With Eleanor Bron as Miss Minchin. Directed by Alfonso Cuarón. Written by Richard LaGravenese and Elizabeth Chandler, based on Frances Hodgson Burnett's 1888 novel, "Sara Crewe." Opening May 10. (Gemini.)

Nina Takes a Lover—In writer-director Alan Jacobs' feature-film début, a San Francisco journalist (Michael O'Keefe) working on a story about marriage encounters a housewife (Laura San Giacomo) who is having an affair with a Welsh photographer (Paul Rhys). Opening May 12. (Lincoln Square.)

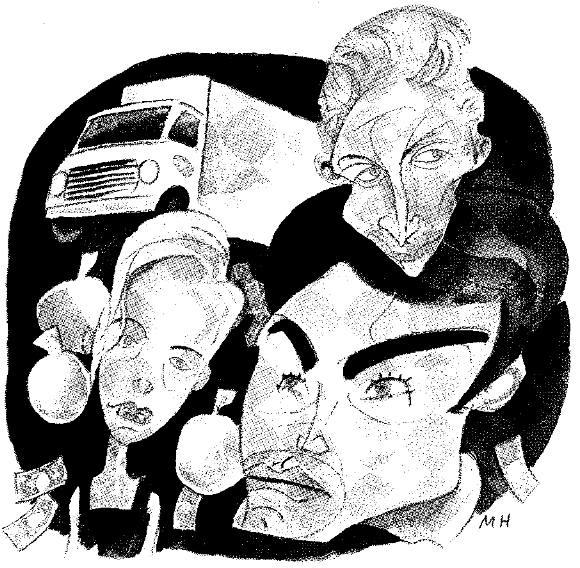
The Perez Family—Juan Perez (Alfred Molina), a newly released Cuban political prisoner on his way to Miami to find Carmela Perez (Anjelica Huston), the wife he hasn't seen for twenty years, is identified through a clerical error as the husband of a passionate young refugee named Dottie Perez (Marisa Tomei). Directed by Mira Nair ("Mississippi Masala," "Salaam Bombay!"). Written by Robin Swicord, from Christine Bell's 1991 novel. Opening May 12. (Village Theatre VII, First & 62nd Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and Embassy.)

CURRENT FILMS

(The signed notes are by Bruce Diones, Sarah Kerr, Anthony Lane, and Terrence Rafferty. If a movie has been reviewed in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given. Theatre addresses and phone numbers are listed on page 30.)

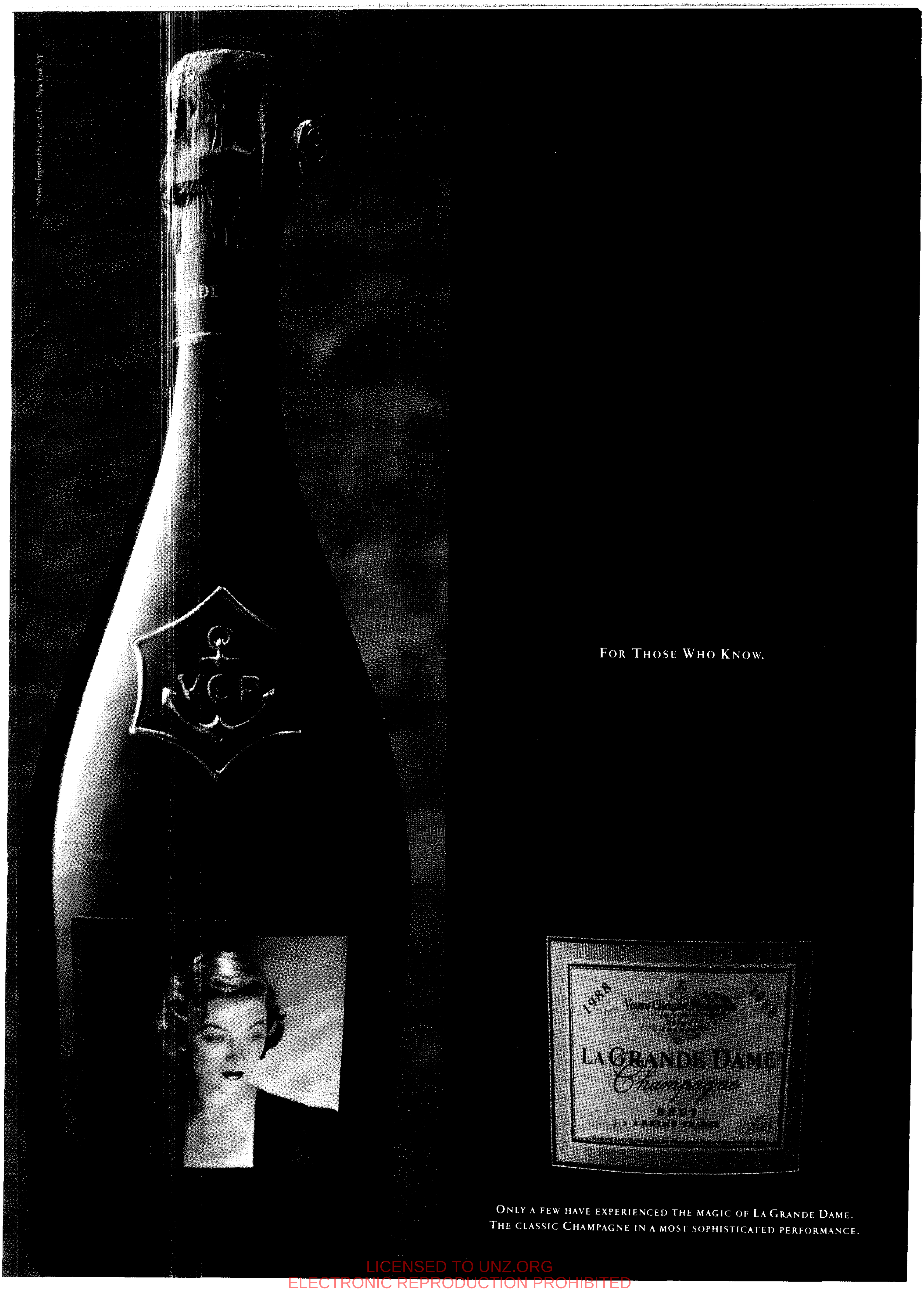
Amateur—In Hal Hartley's lively and very peculiar thriller, an amnesiac (Martin Donovan), an ex-nun (Isabelle Huppert), a porn star (Elina Lowensohn), and an accountant (Damian Young) are on the lam from a sinister European arms merchant. Hartley's Godardian manner is occasionally irritating, but Huppert's delicate, surprisingly witty performance keeps the picture grounded in recognizable human emotions.—T.R. (4/17/95) (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Square.)

The Basketball Diaries—Leonardo DiCaprio plays a high-school-age Jim Carroll, a New York kid who wears a dirty grin, scoffs at his teachers, reduces his mother (Lorraine Bracco) to tears, and hangs out with a bunch of friends, looking for trouble; when they can't find it, they make it. Early on, the picture offers some fine, flowing scenes of the gang tearing down the street with all the zip and glee of Truffaut kids, and lopping and shoving, angular and energetic, across the basketball court. But when Jim discovers heroin—and the film finds a sense of responsibility—the freedom disappears: the latter half becomes a gruelling catalogue of cold nights, blue lips, and scummy needles. DiCaprio gives it everything he's got, but



Alison Elliott, Peter Gallagher, and William Fichtner in "The Underneath."

MARCELLUS HALL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the picture doesn't ask him for much; it isn't interested in his good humor, let alone his good looks. Directed by Scott Kalvert, scripted by Bryan Goluboff, and based on Carroll's own chronicle of his wasted youth, it's all too pleased with itself for getting down into the gutter. The final sequence makes it plain that because Carroll now writes poetry he is cured, and redeemed. That's what he thinks, anyway.—A.L. (Village East Cinemas, Orpheum VII, and Lincoln Square.)

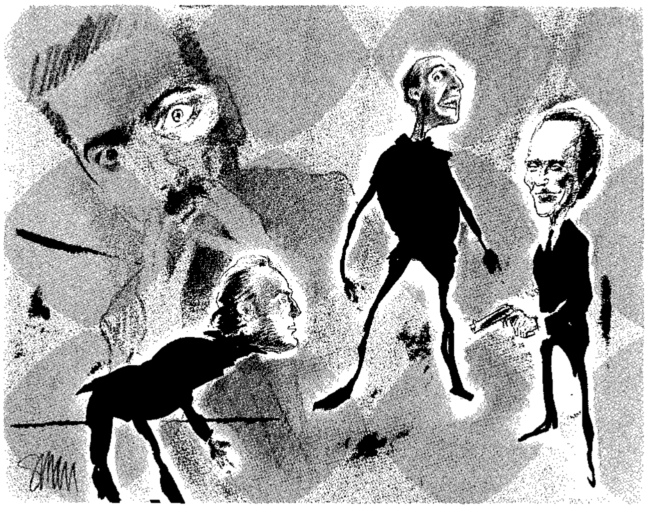
Burnt by the Sun—Set in 1936, in the high summer of Stalinist rule, Nikita Mikhalkov's movie centers on a Soviet army colonel (played by Mikhalkov) and the family group that circulates around him in an idyllic dacha. The idyll cracks when the state, in the person of a family friend (Oleg Menchikov), comes to wreak havoc; a work that began in the rustling spirit of Chekhov ends like a Scorsese picture, with thugs raining blows in the back of a car. What binds the mixture is Mikhalkov's love of all the stray details his camera catches; the movie may sound dispiriting, but it has an amazing ability to cheer you up. There is a full range of acting styles, from the florid to the cartoonish, and to the sharp-eyed, wholly uncute performance of the director's eight-year-old daughter, Nadia, who gazes at the unfolding events with the air of one who will never be able to banish them from her memory. In Russian.—A.L. (5/8/95) (Eastside Playhouse, Quad Cinema, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Crumb—Terry Zwigoff's brilliant, scary documentary about the underground-comics artist R. Crumb. While the film is reviewing Crumb's career, from its psychedelic-era heyday to the present, and following him as he goes about his everyday activities, it's also telling a harrowing story about his damaged family. The hero of this picture is both a courageous resister and a shell-shocked casualty of his family's wars, and Zwigoff's portrait carefully preserves that ambiguity. The movie is often funny, but what makes it extraordinary is that it explores, without presuming to explain, the sources of a unique and savage comic sensibility. And it shows us that Crumb's gift—the detachment that allows him to create such hilariously contemptuous images of the world around him (and inside him)—is also a kind of curse, or, at least, a nasty habit.—T.R. (5/1/95) (Film Forum 3.)

The Day the Sun Turned Cold—A gripping true-crime melodrama. A young factory worker asks the police to look into the possibility that his father's death ten years earlier was caused by something his mother sprinkled in the soup. The vindictive son's motives are never satisfactorily laid out, and the other men remain mostly ciphers; as in "Madame Bovary," it is the woman—in this case, a frumpy, uneducated seller of bean curd, beautifully and enigmatically played by Siqin Gowa—that you remember. Written and directed by Yim Ho. In Mandarin.—S.K. (Quad Cinema.)

Don Juan DeMarco—A young man in a mask (Johnny Depp), who calls himself Don Juan and has been seducing every woman in sight, is put under the care of a psychiatrist (Marlon Brando); the doctor tries at first to cure the youth of his illusion and then begins to wonder whether there might be something to it. The writer and director, Jeremy Leven—himself a former shrink—has taken a heavy conceit and lightened it into comedy, which is what it deserves. Brando enjoys himself hugely, especially in his scenes with Faye Dunaway, who plays his wife. In defiance of the laws of gravity, the big man rises to the occasion and lifts the movie with him.—A.L. (4/10/95) (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, Cinema II, Orpheum VII, Lincoln Square, and Criterion Center.)

Erotique—Three vignettes—about a woman who works a phone-sex line, two lesbians in Hamburg out to pick up a man, and an estranged couple in Hong Kong—directed by Lizzie Borden, Monika Treut, and Clara Law, respectively. With Kamala Lopez-Dawson, Priscilla Barnes, and Marianne Sägebrecht. (Village Theatre VII, Sutton, 23rd St. West Triplex, and 84th Street Sixplex. . . . ¶ East 85th Street; through May 11.)



Griffin Dunne, Dennis Hopper, John Turturro, and Christopher Walken in "Search and Destroy."

DAVID SMALL

French Kiss—Meg Ryan plays a schoolteacher who flies to Paris in pursuit of her wayward fiancé (Timothy Hutton) and there falls for a charming French thief (Kevin Kline), in a film directed by Lawrence Kasdan and written by Adam Brooks. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Murray Hill Cinemas, Gotham Cinema, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Regency, and Embassy.)

Friday—Ice Cube stars in a comedy he co-wrote (with D. J. Pooh) about life in South Central Los Angeles. With Chris Tucker. Directed by Gary Gray. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 19th Street East 6, Gemini, 86th Street East Twin, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

Jefferson in Paris—The subject of Thomas Jefferson's five years as ambassador to France is so rich and engaging that it should be impossible to make a dull film about it; nevertheless, the producing and directing team of Ismail Merchant and James Ivory have pulled it off. The period detail is numbing, and Ruth Prawer Jhabvala's script sounds like a stash of letters being read aloud. Nothing sparks between Nick Nolte, as Jefferson, and Greta Scacchi, as the married woman with whom he is in love, and the high point of his ardor for the black maid with whom he is alleged to have had an affair (Thandie Newton) is the furtive unbuckling of a shoe. When Gwyneth Paltrow, who plays Jefferson's impatient daughter, tears off her fancy wig and stuffs it into a vase, we know just how she feels.—A.L. (Paris.)

Kiss of Death—Barbet Schroeder's workmanlike remake of the 1947 crime melodrama, about the perils of a small-time New York crook who becomes a stool pigeon, demonstrates that gritty urban realism isn't what it used to be. Despite a wonderful cast—which includes David Caruso (as the sensitive squealer), Helen Hunt, Samuel L. Jackson, and Stanley Tucci—and a crafty, low-key screenplay by Richard Price, the picture feels a little lethargic. Only Nicolas Cage manages to dispel the over-all air of weary professionalism. He plays the chief villain, a positive-thinking, bodybuilding thug named Little Junior, as a kind of murderous innocent. It's an original, alarmingly funny performance, and it's just what this picture needs. Also with Kathryn Erbe, Michael Rapaport, and Ving Rhames.—T.R. (5/1/95) (Murray Hill Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Waverly, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Olympia, and Criterion Center.)

My Family—Jimmy Smits, Esai Morales, and Edward James Olmos in a family saga that spans seven decades, beginning with the patriarch's journey from a Mexican village to Los Angeles in the nineteen-twenties. Written (with Anna Thomas) and directed by Gregory Nava. (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, Lincoln Square, and Criterion Center.)

Panther—Courtney B. Vance is Bobby Seale and Marcus Chong is Huey Newton in Mario Van Peebles' chronicle of the rise and fall of the Black Panther Party. With Kadeem Hardison, Joe Don Baker, and Dick Gregory. Screenplay by Melvin Van Peebles, from his novel. (Village Theatre VII, 34th Street Showplace, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, 84th Street Sixplex, and Astor Plaza.)

Picture Bride—A nice-looking, earnest feminist lesson, about a young Japanese woman (Youki Kudoh) who enters into an arranged marriage with a sugarcane cutter (Akira Takayama) in Hawaii in 1918. The picture examines the role of the Japanese contract laborers in the early part of this century and the limited choices available to the women who joined them. Although the director, Kayo Hatta, and her co-writer (and sister), Mari Hatta, have added some Hawaiian folklore and a little Magic Realism, the characters are stereotyped composites of sociohistorical forces. Even as history, though, this film fails to answer the most basic question: what was it like to bend over all day in a hot field cutting sugarcane? In Japanese and English.—S.K. (Angelika Film Center. . . . ¶ 68th St. Playhouse; through May 11.)

Rob Roy—Michael Caton-Jones's film about the eighteenth-century Scottish outlaw Robert MacGregor uneasily straddles the line between swashbuckler and prestige picture. In Alan Sharp's screenplay, Rob (Liam Neeson) is a rugged, principled man at war with artful English fops (Tim Roth and John Hurt). This should make for rousing spectacle, but somehow it doesn't. With Jessica Lange as the hero's loyal wife, the picture is actually more effective as a conjugal-love story than as a ripping yarn.—T.R. (4/17/95) (Village Theatre VII, 34th Street Showplace, Beekman, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Ziegfeld, Lincoln Square, and Metro Cinema.)

Search and Destroy—This vibrantly colored film by the painter David Salle, about the dirty doings of a would-be Hollywood producer, has surprising snap. Dennis Hopper plays the author of an "Iron John"-like best-seller, and Griffin Dunne turns in a good performance as a lost soul willing to do whatever it takes to purchase the rights; his determination leads to drug deals and, eventually, murder. John Turturro, Christopher Walken, and, especially, Illeana Douglas are strikingly crazy as characters who get involved in his scheme. After a while, the desperation of all these people becomes quite moving. Michael Almereyda's hip script, based on Howard Korder's play, isn't all it should be; the ending seems Tarantinoized, but it's impressive.—B.D. (Angelika Film Center and Angelika 57.)

Swimming with Sharks—When Kevin Spacey, as a movie producer from hell, tells an abused assistant to fetch, he oozes the sweet smell of success; his performance is a triumph of nastiness. But when his new assistant (Frank Whaley) decides to fight back and torture his boss, Spacey's character loses his fizz, and the movie becomes a revenge fantasy smothered by a colorless, driven twerp. Written and directed by George Huang.—B.D. (Village Theatre VII and Carnegie Hall Cinemas.)

The Underneath—Steven Soderbergh directs a remake of Robert Siodmak's 1949 film noir "Criss Cross," in which a long-absent son (Peter Gallagher) returns to Austin to attend his mother's wedding, hook up with his ex-wife (Alison Elliott), and commit a robbery. With William Fichtner. (Village Theatre VII, Tower East, and Lincoln Square.)

Village of the Damned—John Carpenter's insipid remake of the 1960 British chiller, about the birth of alien babies in a small town. In the original, the brilliant, emotionless children had a spooky unity of purpose, and the postwar English locale made their clean-cut Aryan appearance doubly unsettling. This version, set in California, has no subtext (even though the kids look like tiny Newt Gingriches); it's an "Omen"-style bloodbath in which the children knock off any townspeople who threaten their plans for world domination. The ensemble cast, led by Christopher Reeve and Kirstie Alley, is uniformly bad. (Carpenter explored a similar theme far more successfully in the 1988 "They Live.")—B.D. (34th St. East, First & 62nd Cinemas, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Metro Cinema, and National Twin.)

While You Were Sleeping—A romantic comedy with Sandra Bullock and Bill Pullman. Directed by Jon Turteltaub. (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, 86th Street East Twin, Guild, and Lincoln Square. . . . ¶ Cinema I; through May 11.)

Wings of Courage—The first feature film to be made in Imax 3-D has to be watched through a special headset (satisfyingly chunky) and lasts forty minutes (gratifyingly short). Craig Sheffer plays a pilot in 1930 hired to fly mail across the Andes while his wife (Elizabeth McGovern) sits at home feeling worried. Instead of rethinking the shape of the drama to suit the format, the director, Jean-Jacques Annaud, has taken a small, simplistic plot, filled a couple of lonely roles with flat performers, and marooned them in the midst of a spectacle that is not so much a movie as a demonstration. With Val Kilmer and Tom Hulce.—A.L. (4/21/95) (Lincoln Square.)

ALSO PLAYING

APARAJITO: Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **BAD BOYS**: Village Theatre VII, 34th Street Showplace, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and National Twin. . . . **BAR GIRLS**: Quad Cinema and Carnegie Hall Cinema. . . . **BEFORE THE RAIN** (reviewed in our issue of 3/13/95): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **BULLETS OVER BROADWAY** (10/24/94): Art Greenwich Twin. . . . **CIRCLE OF FRIENDS**: 19th Street East 6, Coronet, Waverly, and 84th Street Sixplex. . . . **THE CURE**: Olympia. . . . **DESTINY TURNS ON THE RADIO**: Baronet, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and Criterion Center. . . . **DOLORES CLAIBORNE** (4/3/95): First & 62nd Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, and Lincoln Square. . . . **DUMB AND DUMBER**: Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **EXOTICA**: Angelika Film Center and 59th Street East Cinema. . . . **FARINELLI**: Village East Cinemas and Lincoln Square. . . . **FORREST GUMP** (7/25/94): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **A GOOFY MOVIE**: Village East Cinemas, Sutton, 23rd St. West Triplex, Lincoln Square, and Embassy 1. . . . **HEAVENLY CREATURES** (11/21/94): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **HOOP DREAMS** (10/17/94): Plaza and 23rd St. West Triplex. . . . **LEGENDS OF THE FALL** (1/9/95): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **LITTLE WOMEN** (1/9/95): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **THE MADNESS OF KING GEORGE** (1/16/95): Cinema 3 and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **MURIEL'S**

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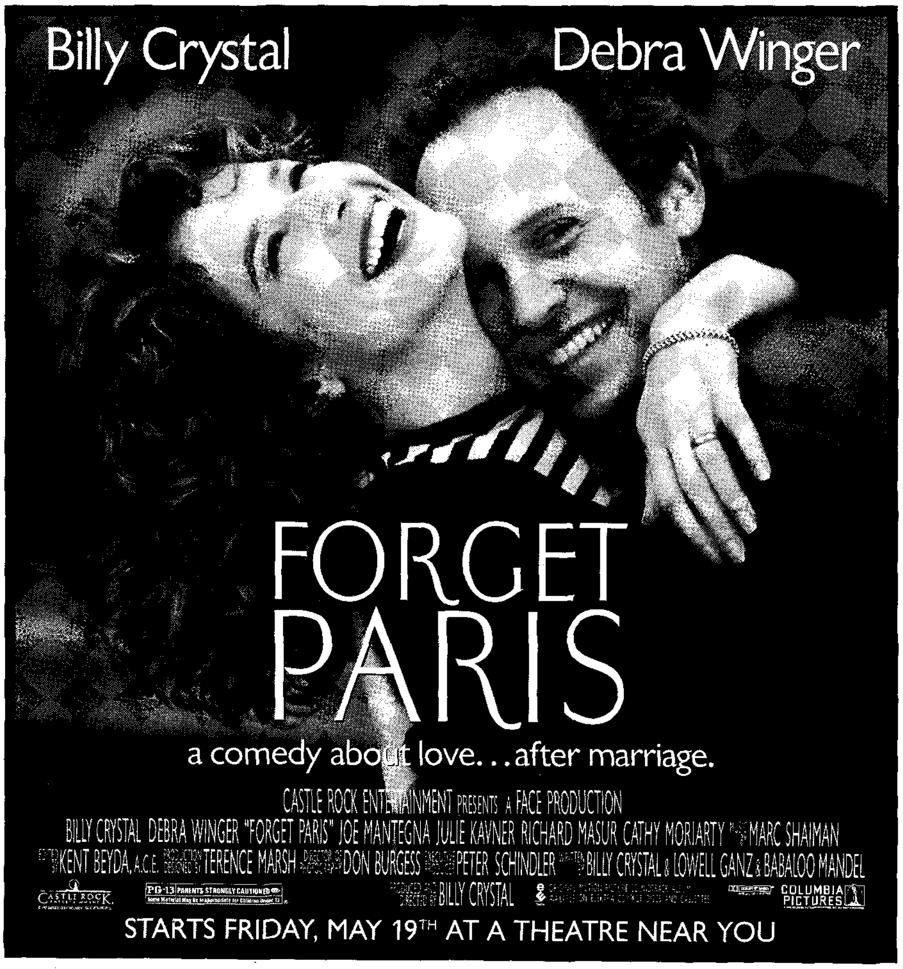
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WEDDING: Village East Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **NEW JERSEY DRIVE**: Embassy. . . . **ONCE WERE WARRIORS**: Angelika Film Center. . . . **ONLY THE BRAVE**: Cinema Village. . . . **OUTBREAK** (3/20/95): Village East Cinemas, Manhattan Twin, and Criterion Center. . . . **PATHER PANCHALI**: 62nd & Broadway. . . . **PRIEST** (3/27/95): Angelika Film Center, Cinema 3rd Avenue, Chelsea Cinemas, and Lincoln Square. . . . **PULP FICTION** (10/10/94): Manhattan Twin, Art Greenwich Twin, 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy. . . . **A PYROMANIAC'S LOVE STORY**: Village East Cinemas, Sutton, 23rd St. West Triplex, 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy 1. . . . **THE SECRET OF ROAN INISH**: Quad Cinema. . . . **TANK GIRL**: Movieland 8th Street Triplex. . . . **TOP DOG**: First & 62nd Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Olympia, and Criterion Center. . . . **THE WORLD OF APU**: Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

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EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000).
Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171).
Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th (477-6600).
Village Theatre VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th (982-0400).
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th (924-3363).
Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th (529-6799).
19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th (260-8000).
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th (689-6548).
34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th (532-5544).
34th St. East, 241 E. 34th (683-0255).
Eastside Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 55th (755-3020).
Sutton 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th (759-1411).
Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th (759-2262).
Plaza, 42 E. 58th (355-3320).
Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th (935-6420).
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th (759-4630).
Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th (355-1663).
Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th (753-6022).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd (513-5408).
Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th (832-1670).
Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th (737-2622).
New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th (744-7339).
68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th (734-0302).
Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st (879-1313).
East 85th Street, 1st Ave. at 85th (249-5100).
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th (534-1880).
Orpheum VII, 3rd Ave. at 86th (876-2400).
86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th (249-1144).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110).
Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd (929-8037).
Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th (929-3350).
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th (255-8800).
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd (513-5402).
23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd (989-0060).
Guild, 33 W. 50th (757-2406).
Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St., between 8th and 9th Aves. (504-0960).
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th (765-7600).
57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th (581-7360).
Carnegie Hall Cinemas, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th (265-2520).
Angelika 57, 225 W. 57th (586-1900).
Paris, 4 W. 58th (980-5656).
Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th (752-5959).
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd (265-7466).
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, B'way at 63rd (757-2280).
Regency, B'way at 67th (724-3700).
Lincoln Square, B'way at 68th (336-5000).
84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th (877-3600).
Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th (222-1200).
Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th (865-8128).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th (354-0900).
Embassy 1, B'way at 46th (302-0494).
Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th (730-7262).
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way (869-8340).
National Twin, B'way at 44th (869-0950).

REVIVALS

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael and Michael Sragow. Theatre addresses and phone numbers appear with the listings following these notes.)

Bigger Than Life (1956)—Nicholas Ray's bizarre medical melodrama is all jittery nerves and loose ends. James Mason (who also produced) stars as a principled public-school teacher who becomes addicted to cortisone and develops psychotic delusions of grandeur. The opening depicts the constrictions of a teacher's lot (he moonlights as a taxi dispatcher to make ends meet) and the claustrophobia of fifties family life (he doesn't tell his wife about his second job because she might consider it beneath him). So it's disconcerting that the rest of the movie coerces the audience into rooting for Mason to reënter the same existential cage. Cortisone turns him into a quasi-fascist megalomaniac; home and family redeem him. Cyril Hume and Richard Maibaum wrote the script, from a *New Yorker* article by Berton Roueché.—M.S. (American Museum of the Moving Image; May 13.)

Bob le Flambeur (1955)—You may get restless during the elaborate setup, which makes this oddball caper movie, set largely in Montmartre, begin like a conventional essay on cops, crooks, and the molls who cause dishonor among thieves. The plot is straight out of "The Asphalt Jungle": a down-on-his-luck gambler (the suave, world-weary Roger Duchesne), preparing to rob the Deauville casino, is placed at risk by the flapping mouths of his partners and their women. But the director, Jean-Pierre Melville (who changed his last name from Grumbach after reading "Moby-Dick"), puts a saturnine twist on the action. And the cinematographer, Henri Decaë, working in black and white, goes from the subtle gray hues of dawn and twilight to gutter chiaroscuro, giving each camera movement a lovely shape, every image a gritty beauty. The movie is slight, even silly, but charming in its preening masculine way. In French.—M.S. (Museum of Modern Art; May 14 and 16.)

Daybreak ("Le Jour Se Lève," 1939)—The director, Marcel Carné, and the writer, Jacques Prévert, collaborated on this justly famous film about a decent sort of man (Jean Gabin) who is forced to become a murderer by the masochistic trickery of the man he kills. Perhaps the finest of the French poetic melodramas, it's a definitive example of sensuous, atmospheric moviemaking. With Arletty and Jacqueline Laurent, and a good score by Maurice Jaubert. In French.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; May 14.)

I've Heard the Mermaids Singing (1987)—As played by the resourceful Sheila McCarthy, the heroine—a Toronto temp worker and art-struck amateur photographer—is a wide-eyed, carrot-topped gamine with endearing affectations. Her flutters and silent gulps don't just express clumsiness or embarrassment; they come out of an unsettling personality. The movie pivots on her obsession with one boss (Paule Baillargeon), an ambitious gallery operator and all-around cultured gal. The writer-director, Patricia Rozema, is at her best when gently lampooning both these women, who are bent on self-expression—and don't have enough self to express. Sadly, the movie slides downward into preciousness and pathos.—M.S. (A Different Light Bookstore; May 13.)

Scenes from a Marriage (1973)—Introducing the published script of his six-episode TV miniseries, Ingmar Bergman wrote that "all artistically sensitive people" would be "disgusted by this quite understandable work" and even "aesthetically sick after the very first scene." In this drama he comes off as a sociologist of the emotions, describing the archetypal crises of a middle-class marriage (fleshed out by Liv Ullmann and Erland Josephson): the fading of youthful romance; affairs and divorce; attempts at reconciliation. Bergman achieves what he's after—an uncluttered naturalism and acting so intimate that the mass of small touches is absorbing, if amorphous. But the series is impotent. It has no cumulative emotional strength, and the outcome borders on the platitudinous, with the couple agreeing that they should have tried harder to share their souls. Acclaimed at the time as a masterwork, today it plays like the "thirtysomething" of the seventies. In Swedish.—M.S. (Museum of Television and Radio; May 13-14.)

At Film Forum 2, eleven Betty Boop shorts.

RICHARD MERKIN

Summer Interlude (1951)—This early Ingmar Bergman film is about the loss of love: a tired ballerina of twenty-eight (Maj-Britt Nilsson), who has ceased to feel or care, is suddenly caught up by the memory of the summer when her life ended. We see her then as a fresh, eager fifteen-year-old, in love with a frightened, uncertain student (beautifully played by Birger Malmsten), and we watch the delicate shades of their "summer play," interrupted by glances at adult relatives, as Bergman contrasts decadence and youth, corruption and beauty. But this movie, with its rapturous yet ruined love affair, also has a lighter side: an elegiac grace and sweetness. In Swedish.—P.K. (Walter Reade Theatre; May 14-15.)

LATE RUNS, CLASSICS, ETC.

(Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.)

Film Forum 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)—Through May 11: "Rebel Without a Cause" (1955, Nicholas Ray). . . . ¶ From May 12: A program of eleven Betty Boop shorts, made by Max and Dave Fleischer in Manhattan in the early thirties.

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)—A program titled "Crossroads: The North African and Middle East Film Festival."

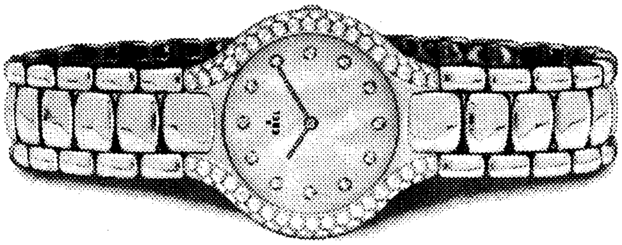
Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—May 11 at 2:30 and May 12 at 6: "Full Moon in Paris" (1984, Eric Rohmer; in French). . . . ¶ May 11 at 3 and 6: "In Darkest Hollywood" (1993, Peter Davis and Daniel Riesenfeld). . . . ¶ May 11 at 6: "Alphaville" (1965, Jean-Luc Godard; in French). . . . ¶ May 12 at 2:30 and May 13 at 2: "The War of the Buttons" (1961, Yves Robert; in French). . . . ¶ May 12 at 3, 6, and 8; May 13 at 2:30 and 5; and May 14 at 2 and 5: A program of films by or about Marguerite Duras. . . . ¶ May 12 at 8:30: "Goupi Mains Rouges" (1942, Jacques Becker; in French). . . . ¶ May 13 at 5: "The Man Who Loved Women" (1977, François Truffaut; in French). . . . ¶ May 14 at 2 and May 16 at 6: "Bob le Flambeur" (†). . . . ¶ May 14 at 5: "Daybreak" (†). . . . ¶ May 15 at 2:30: "We Won't Grow Old Together" (1972, Maurice Pialat; in French). . . . ¶ May 15 at 6 and May 16 at 2:30: "L.627" (1992, Bertrand Tavernier; in French).

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level (875-5600)—A retrospective of films by Ingmar Bergman. May 10 at 2, 6, and 9:45: "Night Is My Future" (1948). . . . May 10 at 3:45 and 7:45: "A Ship Bound for India" (1947). . . . May 11 at 2 and 9 and May 12 at 3:45 and 7:45: "Port of Call" (1948). . . . May 11 at 4 and May 12 at 2, 6, and 9:45: "The Devil's Wanton" (1949). . . . May 13-14 at 2: "Ronia, the Robber's Daughter" (1984), for children. . . . May 13 at 4 and 7:45: "Three Strange Loves" (1949). . . . May 13 at 5:45 and 9:30: "To Joy" (1949). . . . May 14-15 at 4 and 8: "Summer Interlude" (†). . . . May 14 at 6 and May 15 at 2 and 6: "Secrets of Women" (1952). . . . May 16 at 2: "Monika" (1953). . . . May 16 at 4: "Sawdust and Tinsel" (1953).

Museum of Television and Radio, 25 W. 52nd St. (621-6800)—A retrospective of television work by Ingmar Bergman. May 10-12 at 2: "Madame de Sade" (1992). . . . May 11 at 5 and May 12 at 6: "Public Broadcasting Laboratory: Ingmar Bergman" (1968). . . . May 11 at 6:30 and May 12 at 7:45: "The Ritual" (1969). . . . May 13 at 1: "Ingmar Bergman: The Magic Lantern" (1988). . . . May 13-14 at 2: "Scenes from a Marriage" (†). . . . May 14 at 1: "Ingmar Bergman: The Director" (1988). . . . May 16 at 2: "Börtz, Bergman, and The Bacchae" (1993). . . . May 16 at 3:15: "The Bacchae" (1993).

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (1-718 784-0077)—A program of films by Nicholas Ray. May 13 at 2: "Bigger Than Life" (†). . . . May 13 at 4: "Bitter Victory" (1957). . . . May 14 at 2: "Run for Cover" (1955). . . . May 14 at 4: "Hot Blood" (1956).

A Different Light Bookstore, 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850)—A Saturday-and-Sunday-night series of free films (and popcorn). On May 13 at 7, the feature will be "I've Heard the Mermaids Singing" (†). On May 14 at 7, the feature will be Paul Morrissey's "Trash" (1970), with Joe Dallesandro and Holly Woodlawn.



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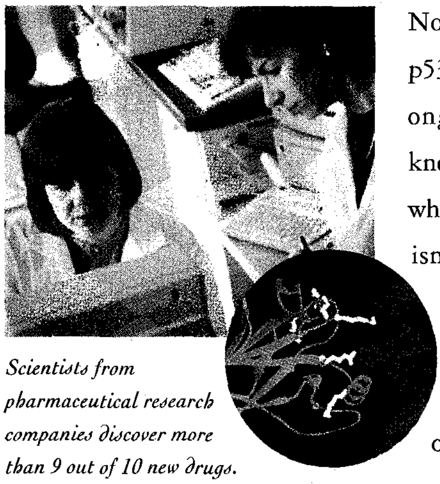

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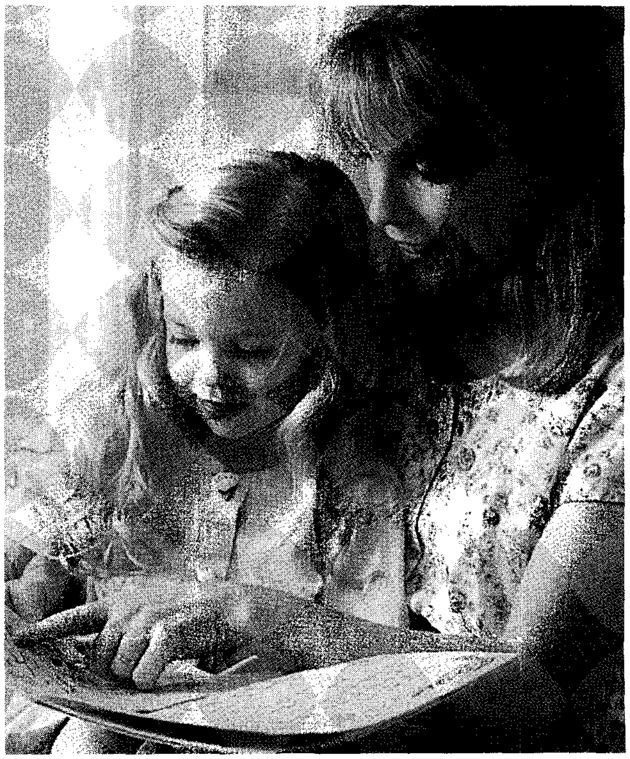

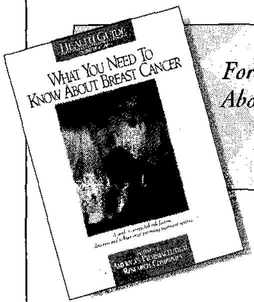
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THE NEW YORKER

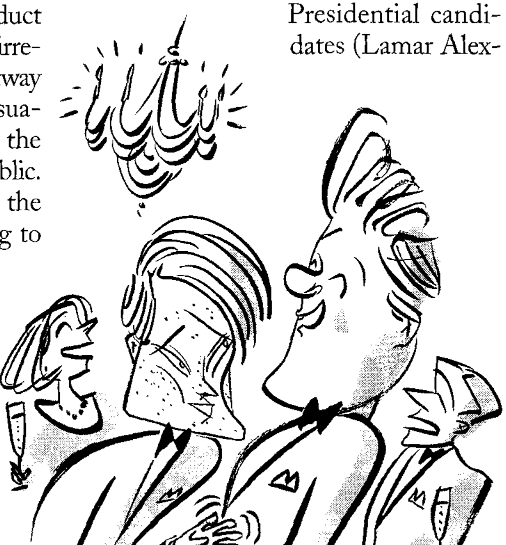
THE TALK OF THE TOWN

ROASTED AND TOASTED IN D.C.

The annual dinner of the White House Correspondents' Association is an event calculated to confirm the darkest suspicions of talk-radio populists. Here you have—all in one room (the huge, clamshell-shaped Great Hall of the People-style ballroom of the Washington Hilton, a.k.a. the Hinckley Hilton), all wearing dinner jackets and evening dresses, all eating expensive food, all (well, most) drinking alcoholic beverages, and all chumming it up as if they couldn't be happier to see one another despite their supposedly mortal disagreements on the key issues—the powerful of the political and the media establishments: Bill Clinton and Newt Gingrich, Robert Novak and Christopher Hitchens, Rupert Murdoch and Katharine Graham. Plus dozens more such pairings, plus a couple of thousand representatives of the news organizations that pay for it all and deduct the cost from their taxable incomes—irrefutable evidence that inside the Beltway the privileged of all parties and persuasions are having a high old time at the expense of Mr. and Mrs. John Q. Public.

Or maybe it's just evidence that the privileged are hard up for something to do on a Saturday night. Either way, there was general agreement that this year's dinner was a bit below average. The traditional scarlet-letter slot, occupied in the past by Rita Jenrette, Jessica Hahn, Donna Rice, or Marla Maples, was empty. The O.J. trial, from which a planeload had been anticipated, came through with only F. Lee Bailey. The show-biz contingent was barely numerous enough to fill out an edition of "The Hollywood Squares," and arguably at about the right level of fame: Tony Curtis, Ruth (Dr. Ruth) Westheimer, Mary Steenburgen, Dick Cavett, and Sonny Bono (Republican, California). Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, the lieutenant governor of Maryland, and Kerry Kennedy Cuomo—R.F.K. daughters both—were there; but, in a startling measure of dynastic decline, the only Kennedys listed under "K" in the dinner's program booklet were Kennedy, Helen (a reporter for the rabidly anti-Ted Boston *Herald*); Kennedy, Randall (the Harvard law professor, who is a supporter of Ted but no relation); and just plain Kennedy (the MTV video jockey, of Reaganite sympathies).

On the other hand, the turnout was perfectly respectable in certain other categories: Clinton Cabinet members (Madeleine Albright, Bruce Babbitt, Ron Brown, Henry Cisneros, Leon Panetta, Janet Reno, Donna Shalala); Republican Presidential candidates (Lamar Alexander, Arlen Specter) and non-candidates (William Bennett, Richard Cheney, Colin Powell); right-wing publicists (Reed Irvine, William Kristol, P. J. O'Rourke, John Podhoretz, Ralph Reed, R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.); and fun couples—Michael and Arianna Huffington, Robert Torricelli and Bianca Jagger, Ron Perelman and Patricia Duff, Alfonse D'Amato and Claudia Cohen. This last pair of pairs had to tread carefully, since Ms. Cohen, a television gossip reporter, is between husbands at the moment, and the husbands she is between are Mr. Perelman and Senator D'Amato.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL

The entertainment at the dinner follows a rigid pattern. First, the Joint Armed Forces Color Guard marches up and down the center aisle with flags while the Marine Band plays stirring patriotic airs. Second, officials of the White House Correspondents' Association announce an interminable list of journalism awards, all of which have already been announced in the program booklet. Third, a professional comedian delivers a routine. This time, it was Conan O'Brien, the late-night television host and former president of the *Harvard Lampoon*. The first half of his performance was amusing, if a little rough—e.g., "When Pat Buchanan announced his candidacy, some people . . . ran onto the stage carrying signs that read, 'Pat Buchanan is a racist.' And those were his *supporters*." The second half—during which O'Brien conducted a mock interview with a televised photograph of Clinton, complete with moving lips—was just rough.

Fourth, and last, the President speaks. Normally, his remarks are of a jocular nature, and they are judged on whether they are sufficiently (a) funny and (b) selfdeprecating. Sometimes, however, the President is in a lousy mood, or, as was the case last week, some grave event has made Presidential hilarity potentially unseemly. By way of helping the audience feel unembarrassed at having enjoyed itself, Clinton made a small joke about his and O'Brien's shared inability to break into prime-time television. "I feel your pain," the President said, smiling at the comedian. Then he spoke about Oklahoma City. The world will little note nor long remember what he said, but he was graceful. He ended with a quotation from W. H. Auden's poem about Yeats:

In the deserts of the heart
Let the healing fountain start,
In the prison of his days
Teach the free man how to praise.

Say what you will about Bill Clinton, it's not every President who can quote Auden and make you think he might have actually heard of him, maybe even read him, before being handed his talking points.

GHOST STORY

OVER at the Belasco, where Ralph Fiennes is appearing in "Hamlet," the ghost—a stocky guy in a full suit of armor—appears twice nightly to the noble Dane, announced by white light, smoke, and a piercing electronic *Zot!* But Hamlet's Father's Ghost may not be the only apparition in the house. David Belasco, the producer, director, and playwright, who, in 1907, built the theatre that bears his name, and who died in 1931, is rumored to be still in residence. Lately, the backstage doorman, John Quinn, has received reports from a spooked crew of "strange sounds." He says, "Some drapery people came back to ask me if there was someone else in the house." Belasco, who liked the company of stars—and who made many of them—may well be on the prowl to catch a glimpse of the charismatic Fiennes. If the ghost appears, he'll certainly be easy to spot: Belasco's sartorial trademark was a clerical collar. And an angel on Broadway is always news.

10024

IN the lobby of 31 Chambers Street, the 1911 Beaux-Arts Surrogate's Court Building, a ballroom scene is being filmed. The ceilings are forty-five feet high and there is marble everywhere. Lauren Hutton is standing facing the room's grandiose double staircase, waiting for her cue. In between takes, she spends time looking in a small orange-plastic-backed mirror. She is wearing a floor-length black lace dress cut low in the back and in the front, three-and-a-half-inch heels, and a diamond necklace, bracelet, and earrings from Fred Leighton. The general atmosphere is Sutton Place, but the scene is from "Central Park West," a prime-time soap being readied for the fall, conceived by Darren Star ("Beverly Hills 90210," "Melrose Place"), who's across the ballroom, watching.

Over a hundred extras in long dresses and tuxedos are here, along with the show's stars—Hutton (who plays the wife of an all-powerful magazine publisher), Madchen Amick (her daughter), and Mariel Hemingway (a magazine editor Hutton's husband has hired). Everyone is thin and has soldierlike posture, a small nose, a strong jawline, and long legs. Looking for a short, fat, or ethnic person is a waste of time.

It's pointed out to Darren Star that there are quite a few blondes in "Central Park West."

"The only real blonde is Mariel Hemingway," he says. "Lauren Hutton is blond*ish*. She's New York blond. Basically, Lauren Hutton reads so New York that her hair color is beside the point."

Filming has begun. Madchen Amick is walking down one of the marble staircases smoking a cigarette. She's wearing dark, dark lipstick and a short, slinky beaded gold sheath. She has a vague tattoo on the back of one shoulder and a long strand of double pearls hanging down her back, past her waist. Jeffrey Kurland, the costume designer, says he didn't have fantasies about anyone in particular when he designed the dress. "I read the script," he adds, with genteel gravity. He watches Amick walk down the staircase on five-inch heels. "See her backside and her leg? That's the point. She's a rich girl who's rebellious." He goes on, "Lauren's dress was cut down, but not for her—for her character. They're not clothes—they're costumes on the screen."

Mariel Hemingway is wandering around with her hair in rollers. Her editor character has been brought in from a Seattle fitness magazine to revitalize a glossy called *New York Communiqué*. Hemingway, who appears to have avoided any nervousness in her genes, is wearing dark-slate-blue pencil-thin trousers, a molasses-brown polo coat, and black sneakers—not a costume but clothes.

"The magazine scene is a wonderful backdrop to human relationships," Star is saying. "Stephanie"—the Hemingway character—"is a very down-to-earth girl. She's in a little over her head."

"We want America to understand what New York is about," Kurland is saying. "We have extensive fittings. If a character would go to Saks, you go to Saks. If they go to SoHo, you go to SoHo. Lauren's character would shop at Bergdorf. You go where they shop. Then you do your fittings. And then you accessorize down to the cufflinks."

THAT'S one New York. The "Central Park West" people are, of course, aware that there are others. Allan Arkush, the director, tall with big, frizzy gray-brown hair, says with a droll world-weariness, "This is wish fulfillment—it's not a gritty cop show. Darren and I sat down and talked about 'Sweet Smell of Success' and 'Breakfast at Tiffany's.' *That* side of Manhattan."

"I think Central Park West represents an *idea* of New York," Star says impassively. "It's more *impressionistic* than *realistic*. A lot of people say, 'Oh, gee, Central Park West is families,' and this and that." He adds, "The truth is that the real Melrose Place is a little tiny street that's full of antique shops."

"Will there be any Jews in 'Central Park West'?"

Hemingway, who has disappeared for a while, returns to the set without her coat and without rollers in her mostly straight hair.

"Let me see," Arkush says. "Who could be Jewish? Mariel's boss. His name's Rush. He may have changed his name."

Hemingway joins in shyly, saying, "I'm Jewish. Very Jewish. I'm a yenta."

Arkush says, "You are a shiksa goddess. Face it."

BACK FROM THE VOID

Mark Kindschuh, a doctor with the New York City Emergency Medical Service, was a member of the New York team that took part in the Urban Search and Rescue mission in Oklahoma City during the week following the bombing. After he returned home, to Brooklyn, the other day, one of the first things he did was put together a list of the phone numbers of the men and women he had worked with. He also began to sort through newspaper clippings about the bombing which his wife, Catherine, had collected, and to assemble the photographs he had taken, both of his colleagues and of the wreckage of the blast. Asked if he had felt odd taking the pictures, he said, "Yes, at first." Asked why he had taken them, his answer was even briefer: "To remember."

The medicine that Kindschuh practices at E.M.S. is curiously sanitized, for he works in telemetry—the dispatch of medical instructions by telephone or radio to the ambulance crews in the field. His experience with the brutal realities of trauma was more immediate at his previous job, at Bellevue, but, he said, "nothing you do can prepare you for something like this."

And nothing, horribly, was all that he, or anyone, could do. "From a physician's perspective, you don't deal with death as death," Kindschuh said. "Your work is over then. Out there, we were met with death only. We were defeated as soon as we got there. The entire time, we were in mourning." Kindschuh treated several rescue workers for eye injuries from the wind-whipped concrete dust, and there was danger of contamination from the bodies themselves as they decomposed. At one point, the New York team insisted on a suspension of operations until the nine-story structure could be shored up. The "voids," as the pockets of space in the wreckage were called, yielded no survivors.

The workers dug in twelve-hour shifts. One New York firefighter, who suffered a knee injury in a wall collapse, could be persuaded to stop for the day only after he was reminded that the swelling from his injury could prevent him from taking part in the next day's labors. Michael Curtin, a police officer from Emergency Services Squad 7 and a Marine Corps veteran, who lives on Long Island, was the first to spy the blue dress pants, with a red stripe down the side, that signalled a fellow-marine in the rubble. Like the other victims, the dead marine was placed in a body bag and then in a Stokes basket—an aluminum-mesh stretcher—and laid on a gurney. But the grimly utilitarian devices took on an austere, and even a transcendent, aura when, at dawn, a flag was draped over the gurney, and Curtin and three others accompanied it out of the rubble like pallbearers around a catafalque. "You saw the last stars, and the first light, and everything was quiet except the hum of the machinery. All the workers took off their helmets as the body passed by with the four men," Kindschuh said. "I won't forget that."

At the New York team's base, there were piles of cards from children, which some workers read for hours and others

LIVING FOR DESIGN *Professional designers are eagerly awaiting the annual International Contemporary Furniture Fair, to be held May 20-23 at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center. On the last day, it's open to the public, and you may see characters like these.*

Timely yet timeless: For C. Elliott and Piper McGill, the fair is always a highlight in a busy schedule. "It's a form of sustenance, really."

Sweeping curves, gestural excitement: Dolci Grumbach is bursting out of her bibendum, and plans to attend all four days.

Purity: Dewitt Sprouse takes a minimalist approach. "I hardly ever buy at the fair," he says. Then again his apartment is small. . . .

No faux embellishment here: Betsy Woolley seeks design with impact.

could not bear to read. During one meal break, a young man approached the team members as they ate. "He said, 'Thank you. My mother's still up there. Thank you for what you're doing,' " recalled Kindschuh, still animated and exhausted by the events. "But we didn't save a soul. There was a slow march to everything. That struck me. And we brought people home. That's all we did."

STELLA'S RING CYCLE

THESE are dismal times for tobacco lovers, but at least one smoker has put his habit to enterprising use. Some time ago, Frank Stella, the painter, sculptor, and horse breeder, was in his East Village studio, chewing the fat with a collaborator, Earl Childress—specifically, chewing the fat about chaos theory. Childress says, "I was explaining the notion of changing form and how useful fractal geometry is. Frank is always smoking cigars and blowing smoke rings, and he just happened to ask me if I thought you could calculate a smoke ring." Soon thereafter, Childress talked with "a guy at the British Museum who was doing an awful lot of work with vortex systems." He looked into building an artificial orifice and into whether a liquid simulacrum of a smoke ring could be created and immobilized in another liquid. What had been born out of general curiosity was now a project to find a way to generate forms that Stella could use in his work.

In the end, it came down to a box with a camera built into each of the four sides. "Frank blew a bunch of smoke rings in there," Childress explains. "We synched the cameras to flash at the same time, and we recorded all these stages of bifurcation of the smoke rings." Then, the photographs were computer-scanned.

Are Frank Stella's smoke rings special?

"He's had a tremendous amount of practice," Childress says. "The other day, someone asked Frank why he started smoking cigars in the first place. He told me Clement Greenberg had given him some of the contents of a box of Cuban cigars that David Smith hadn't smoked before he died. So the whole damn thing got real romantic."

MESSAGE TO RUDY

THIS year marks the twentieth anniversary of New York City's very near brush with bankruptcy, and recently a clutch of silver-haired veterans of the administration of former Governor Hugh Carey, who is widely credited with staving off that disaster, gathered to regale each other with anecdotes from that dire, thrilling era, and to ponder what lessons it has to offer this one. Thanks in part to the budgetary controls those men put in place, the city is no longer threatened with insolvency even when a combination of the business cycle and the city's habitual plundering of its treasury has opened a vast budget gap, as is now the case. On the other hand, as several members of Team Carey pointed out, crises come in different forms. "Last time, we had a cliff," remarked the morning's first speaker, Peter Goldmark, once Carey's budget director and now the president of the Rockefeller Foundation. "This time, we have a desert."

Goldmark was thinking not only of the deficit but also of the drastic cuts that Mayor Rudolph Giuliani has proposed in order to close the gap—in education, social services, parks, youth programs, and the like, as well as in welfare and Medicaid payments. The point implicit in Goldmark's metaphor was that such breathtaking reductions constitute a crisis of a different order—a slow-motion drama of deprivation that might begin with the city's poor but could ultimately drag down the city itself.

The symposium, "The Carey Years: Lessons for New York and the Nation," was held in the cushy auditorium of the Chemical Bank headquarters, on Park Avenue, and at times it had the slightly woozy feeling of a class reunion. The investment banker Felix Rohatyn recalled the time the Governor took the blame for a billion-dollar screwup he and Goldmark had made. He praised his former boss as a leader with a rare combination of "brains, guts, and a sense of humor." But the nostalgia was laced with a sense of urgency. Rohatyn suggested, as he has before, that the city temporarily raise some taxes to balance the budget—a proposal that Mayor Giuliani has flatly rejected in the past. The Mayor does not accept the metaphor of the desert; he has mocked as a reflex action of the city's extravagant liberals the claims that his cuts have caused suffering. In fact, Rohatyn was followed by Deputy Mayor John Dyson, who said that his current boss had asked him to deliver a message to the group: If only they had cut city taxes back then, the city's economy might be flourishing today. The message was received with polite silence.

The issue of the day, however, was not taxes, or even deficit financing. It was equity—the idea that in hard times leaders depend upon the consent of the governed, and that that consent must be earned by a conscientious regard for everyone's welfare. Such a sense of shared purpose has been missing from our current crisis. Part of it is the difference between a cliff and a desert, but another part is political leadership. "It's not about a shootout with some evil enemy," Goldmark said. And that was *their* message back to the Mayor, if he cared to hear it. ♦

FRANKFURT ON A ROLL

THE haut monde of Madison Avenue, some in power suits, some with ponytails, convened at the Boathouse in Central Park the other evening to honor Stephen Frankfurt, one of the reigning kings of advertising. Surprisingly, the most creative speaker of the evening wasn't Steve but his younger brother Mike, a straight-arrow lawyer, who broke into a monologue, à la Alan King, about what it was like growing up in Steve's shadow.

•

On sharing: "I remember my father asking me to donate a kidney to Steve. Not because he needed one—just in case."

•

On religion: "It was 1962 when I found out that the youngest son asks the four questions at Passover."

•

On favors: "I was Steve's first favor. When Steve was four years old, he said to my father, 'Dad, do me a favor . . .' "

•

On death: "I went down to the New York *Times* and asked to see my obituary. The headline: 'Steve Frankfurt's brother died today—Steve felt terrible.' Underneath, there was a picture of Steve, smiling confidently. And it went on, 'He is survived by his brother Steve, the youngest president of Young & Rubicam, and now chairman of Frankfurt Balkind. We'll all miss Mike Frankfurt. But it could have been worse. It might have been Steve!' "

This week's contributors: Hendrik Hertzberg, John Lahr, Alison Rose, Edward Conlon, Anthony Haden-Guest, James Traub.

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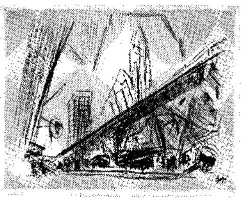

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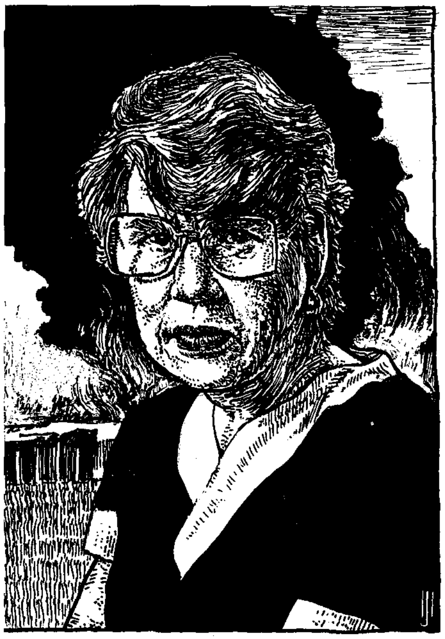
ANNALS OF ACCOUNTABILITY

CHILDREN OF WACO

The Oklahoma bombing is a reminder that the wounds of Waco have never healed. But Janet Reno's anguished decision has its own emotional scars.

BY PETER J. BOYER

Two years ago, a woman named Amo Bishop Roden came to live in the place where David Koresh and eighty-five of his Branch Davidian followers had just died. At first, the authorities kept her away from the site, and she lived in a ditch alongside the gravel road leading to the property, but eventually the officials left and she moved in, fashioning an eight-by-eight-foot home for herself from scattered fence posts, pallets, sheet metal, and some screens that were used to sift evidence from the ashes. Amo says she came because she was instructed by God to keep alive the true "end-time church," charged with gathering up the righteous before the destruction of the world. Also, she sold T-shirts, photographs, and other Davidian memorabilia. From the beginning, there was a public. "People come by every day," she told me last week. "And usually it's running around a hundred a day."



A privately haunted Reno finds herself cast as an evil icon by the militant fringe.

As a tourist attraction, the site does not offer much; after the incineration of the compound, on April 19, 1993, bulldozers razed what remained of the buildings, and also the concrete bunkers below. Still, people have come—a constant flow of them, determined to walk among the ruins, gaze at the foundations beneath the rubble, or glimpse the Davidian swimming pool, which the bulldozers somehow left in place. They walk through the grove of young crape myrtles, each bearing a cross and the name and sometimes the picture of a Davidian who died in the fire. But only a few of the visitors are motivated by religion. "Most of them are tourists, but some are constitutional activists," Amo says; that is, members of that portion of the American extreme fringe which believes the F.B.I. raid on the Davidian compound exemplified a government at war with its citizens. To them, Waco is a shrine, and April 19th is a near-mystical date, warranting sober commemoration. Last month, on the second anniversary of the Waco conflagration, among those gathered at the site were former Attorney General Ramsey Clark, who represents some Davidian survivors and families, and who believes that a special prosecutor should investigate the government's actions, and an honor guard from the Northeast Texas Constitutional Militia, which showed up in full military dress to dedicate a stone monument listing the names of the dead. It was also on that morning, of course, that a bomb exploded at the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building, in Oklahoma City. Timothy McVeigh, the principal suspect in the bombing, had himself made the pilgrimage to Waco, an experience that is said to have fed his rage against the federal government. The phony driver's license that McVeigh handed to the police officer who arrested him listed the issue date as April 19th.

If the Oklahoma City horror alerted

JARRETT HUDDLESTON

the American mainstream to a dangerous and heretofore mostly unregarded fringe, it also served as a reminder that Waco remains a piece of unfinished national business. Senator John McCain, Republican of Arizona, who was a Vietnam War prisoner, likens the brooding enshrinement of Waco to the dark mosaic of conspiracy and mistrust made of the unknown fates of missing American servicemen in Vietnam. McCain feels that a tortured yearlong congressional inquiry into the P.O.W. question firmly answered the question of the missing servicemen. But the government has never convincingly addressed the question of its own culpability in the Branch Davidian disaster, and its failure to do so has created a psychic void that is filled by paranoiac scenarios. Dr. Alan A. Stone, a professor of psychiatry and law at Harvard University, who was one of ten experts invited by the Department of Justice to review the Waco event, believes that the mistakes made at Waco will continue to fuel extremism until they are acknowledged. "The further I get away from Waco, the more I feel that the government stonewalled," Stone says. "It would be better if the government would just say, 'Yes, we made mistakes, and we've done this, this, and that, so it won't happen again.' And, to my knowledge, they've never done it." McCain, among others, has called for congressional hearings into the handling of Waco, so that "when people say that the government plotted to go in and kill women and children, we can say, 'Wait a minute, here are the facts that came out in a congressional hearing.' " Representative Bill McCollum, Republican of Florida, has announced that the House Subcommittee on Crime will hold hearings. Robert Dole, the Senate Majority Leader, has said he wants the Senate to investigate as well. The media, including the *Times*, have also begun to take a second look.

The resurrection of Waco cannot be a welcome development for the one living person most closely associated with the tragedy—Attorney General Janet Reno, who approved the F.B.I. plan to move in on the Davidian compound with Bradley tanks and tear gas. The event defined her publicly, for better or for worse, and privately it haunts her still. "I don't think she has put it behind her, and I don't think she ever will," says Sara Smith, an old Florida friend of Reno's. "I think it is part of her soul." In the coarse, nasty world of the militant extremists, Reno has become an evil icon because of Waco and also because of her stout opposition to guns. The week before the Oklahoma City bombing, Reno's sister, Maggy Hurchalla, received a phone call from a friend who expressed alarm over a recorded telephone message disseminated by a local racist, which, to understate it, wished "Butch Reno" an unhappy demise.

JANET RENO'S decision on Waco was made, it seems in retrospect, under impossibly difficult circumstances. The Davidian standoff—begun with the abortive February 28th raid by agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms—had become a ripe crisis before Reno, an obscure local prosecutor from Miami, was even confirmed. That she was suddenly thrust into the position of resolving it was largely an accident of politics. After the election, Bill Clinton's campaign promise of diversity in his staff was transmuted by "Nannygate" into a premium on childlessness. Having lost his first two Attorney General nominees, Zoe Baird and Kimba Wood, to domestic-help difficulties, Clinton reached down his list for a self-described "awkward old maid" who had been suggested to him by his brother-in-law over dinner. (In interviewing Reno, the White House vetting staff, twice burned, focussed on such questions as "Whom have you hired as domestic help?" and "Whom have you hired as a nanny?" and "Have you ever hired any other helping hands?")

From the moment Clinton introduced Reno to the nation in a Rose Garden press session, in February of 1993, she seemed a species apart from that which national politics naturally breeds. Tall (six feet two) and slightly slope-shouldered, and walking as if her feet hurt in shoes, she was as unglossed as raw timber, and as new. After living nearly all her fifty-four years at home in Florida with her mother, Reno came to Washington to live alone in an apartment where even the coffee-maker and the clock radio were rented. She was not a Friend of Bill, nor did she have close allies in the White House. She was close to no one in the top rank of the Justice Department she now headed, and her requests for two deputies she had met and admired during the confirmation process

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were denied. So in mid-April of 1993 Janet Reno was in a new job, in a new town, and was taking advice from a roomful of virtual strangers—Webster Hubbell, her nominal assistant, was a Clinton crony from Arkansas—when she was obliged to make her first important decision as Attorney General, one of life-and-death consequence. Furthermore, evidence seems to suggest that a key misrepresentation and an omission by the F.B.I. played a part in winning her eventual approval of the plan it had devised for ending the siege.

Ever since the Davidians' February shootout with the A.T.F., the F.B.I. had been on the scene outside Waco, trying to talk Koresh out. The Bureau's stated objective, endorsed by President Clinton, was peaceful resolution of the standoff, "no matter how long it took." Over the weeks, negotiations brought the release of twenty-one children and several adults, but the process was a slow and frustrating one. Complicating the effort was the fact that there were two camps among the F.B.I.'s forces at Waco—the Hostage Rescue Team and the negotiators. The rescue team comprised the F.B.I.'s élite tactics specialists, who by instinct and training were inclined toward action. (It was they who ultimately conceived and executed the tear-gas plan.) The negotiators' approach was to build trust over time and then exploit it toward the desired end—getting people out of the compound without further loss of life to either side. At times throughout the impasse, the two factions were distinctly at odds. While the negotiators were talking with Koresh and others in the Branch Davidian compound, the tactics team was increasing pressure, often without consultation. At one point in March, the negotiators successfully talked Koresh into allowing two people out, but that very night the tactics squad turned off the electricity to the compound, enraging Koresh. Several days later, the negotiators won the release of seven more people, but the tactics team bulldozed Davidian cars outside the compound and broadcast loud music into the night. As the standoff continued, the tactics-team maneuvers came to include the exploding of stun devices whenever a Davidian wandered past a certain boundary without permission.

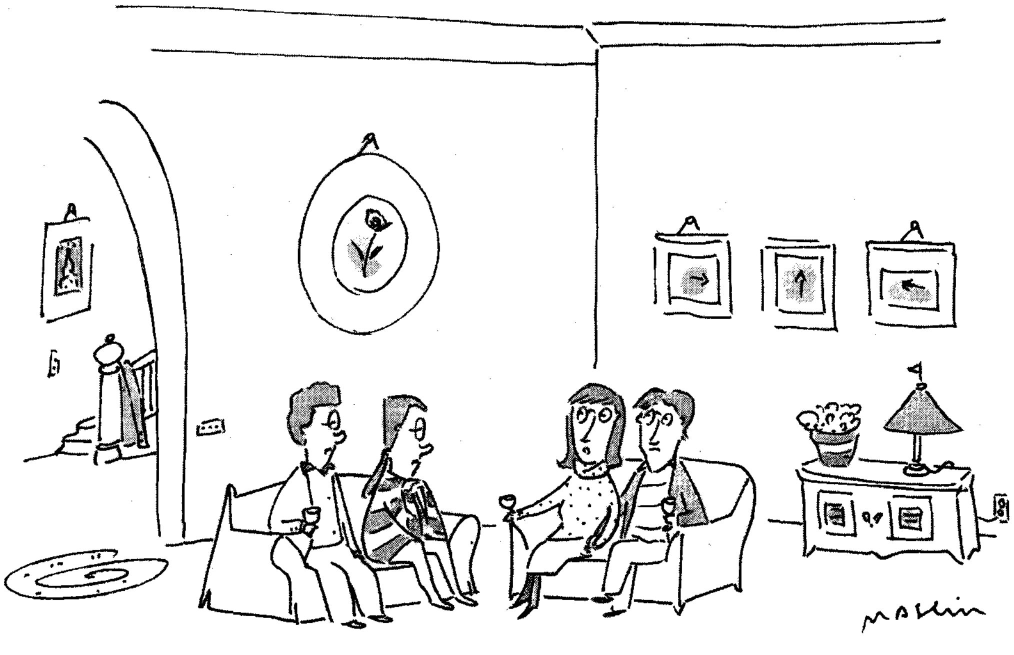
The negotiators complained that the trust they'd built was being undermined. Among those who supported them in that view were some of their colleagues in the F.B.I. By the second week of the standoff, Pete Smerick and Mark Young, psychological profilers for the F.B.I., began to worry that the tactics people were "action-oriented" and inclined to move too quickly toward a tactical rather than a negotiated solution. They warned, too, that the tactical methods would drive the Davidians closer together in their faith in Koresh by demonstrating that the government agents were the enemy, just as Koresh claimed. The lack of progress in negotiations, which was cited as one justification for the tear-gassing, seems to have been at least partly attributable to the harassment from the tactics team.

As the plan for using tear gas began to advance within the F.B.I., officials rejected advice that escalating the pressure dramatically—as in a tear-gas action—would provoke the very apocalypse that Koresh had hinted at. Smerick and Young said that the tactics people should move away from the compound and that tactical pressure "should be the absolute *last* option we should consider." Clinton Van Zandt, of the F.B.I.'s National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime—the so-called "Silence of the Lambs" team—and Dr. Joseph Krofcheck, a psychiatrist, studied a letter given by Koresh to the F.B.I. on April 9th, which contained scriptural references to destruction by fire and explosion, and concluded that an F.B.I. confrontation with Koresh might "bring this matter to a 'magnificent' end, in his mind, a conclusion that could take the lives of all of his followers and as many of the authorities as possible."

Despite the impasse in talks with the Davidians, the majority of the negotiators were willing to continue their efforts, and at least some of them strongly believed that further negotiations would bring more adults or more children from the building. "I'll always, in my own mind, feel like maybe we could have gotten some more people out," one negotiator said in an interview several months after the event.

By the time the F.B.I. came to Reno for approval, on April 12th, its leaders were presenting a united front. A Justice Department report on the events, compiled after the conflagration, offers no indication that Reno was ever informed of the dissension within the Bureau, or that she was told that some negotiators still hoped to talk more people out of the compound. Reno, on the job for just a month, had not yet built constituencies in the Justice Department, and had no cadre of confidants.

The report, which was made public in October of 1993, insists that "the F.B.I. did not try to 'rail-



"Denny and I have decided to retain the façade and gut the rest of the marriage."

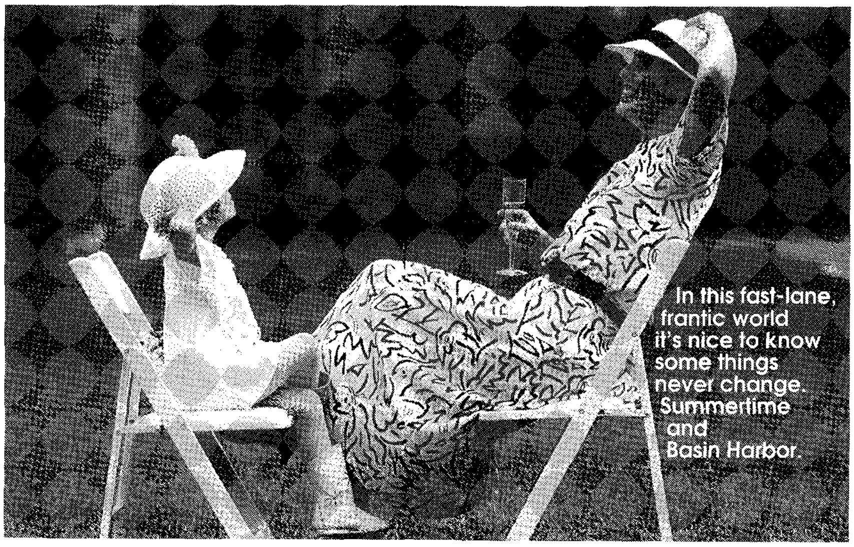
road' her," but a careful reading of the Department's own chronology strongly suggests that the senior Bureau officials who intensively briefed Reno in the week before the assault sought to eliminate her reservations to the gas plan by ruling out alternatives and by satisfying her doubts. And at least one F.B.I. official went beyond that.

During a briefing by the F.B.I. on April 12th, Reno was told that the plan was tentatively scheduled for April 14th. Reno asked the question that President Clinton would later ask her: "Why now?" The F.B.I. officials, led by then Director William Sessions (whose job was under attack, and who desperately needed an F.B.I. triumph to save his career), argued that Koresh's surrender seemed unlikely any time soon. Reno did not approve the plan.

On April 14th, Reno again met with Sessions and his deputies. This time, they brought along the current and former commanders of the United States Army's Delta Force commando squad. The Army people told her that the tear gas was safe, that it was used every year on United States Army soldiers during training, and, apparently, that it wouldn't catch fire. Dr. Harry Salem, an Army toxicologist, told Reno that the gas would likely not hurt the kids or pregnant women. Richard Rogers, the head of the Hostage Rescue Team, said his men would soon need to "stand down" for rest and retraining. Reno wanted to know why, if they needed relief, SWAT teams couldn't be sent in. She was told, according to the report, that the rescue team was "essential." So by the second meeting the F.B.I. had added a new element of urgency: the tactics guys, essential for controlling the scene, would soon have to withdraw if the plan wasn't approved.

The next day, April 15th, Reno again asked, "Why now?" Her advisers telephoned Byron Sage, who was one of the principal negotiators. He believed further negotiations would be fruitless. Koresh was being disingenuous in his discussions about such Davidiana as the "Seven Seals," and Sage said he'd never seen such a total impasse. Besides, he said, agents on the ground were getting tired and their tempers were fraying. Hubbell related this conversation to Reno, who still did not approve the plan.

On April 16th, Hubbell reported a



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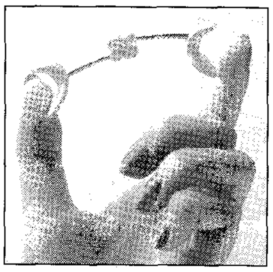

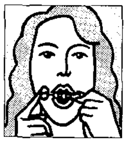

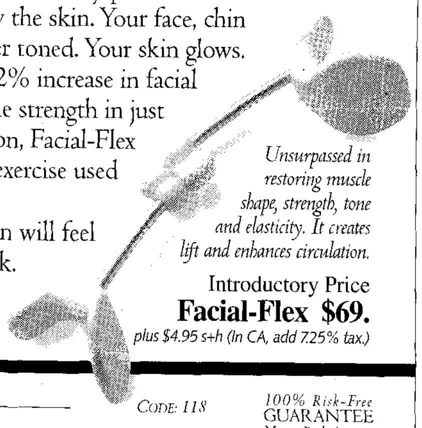

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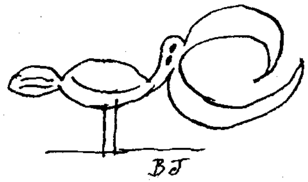
decision: Reno's answer to the F.B.I.'s gas plan was no. But, instead of accepting her decision, Sessions and his two top deputies, Floyd Clarke and Larry Potts, came to the Justice Building, and Sessions asked to see Reno personally. Reno, still unconvinced of the urgency, asked for a documented statement outlining the plan, the current state of negotiations, and the situation inside the compound. By the next day—a Saturday—Reno had received the documentation. She then reversed herself, and approved the plan. The tanks moved in on Monday.

What changed Reno's mind? The implication in the main body of the Justice Department report on Waco is that the documented statement Reno had requested from the F.B.I. somehow swayed her, because after receiving it she *began discussing the rules of engagement* with Sessions, Clarke, and Potts, but a footnote in the report notes that Reno "did not read the prepared statement carefully, nor did she read the supporting documentation provided along with the statement. She [merely] satisfied herself that 'the documentation was there.'" It subsequently became clear that Reno's decision to approve the plan was influenced by her belief that there was ongoing child abuse inside the Davidian compound. The F.B.I.'s briefing book on the Waco situation, which was compiled that final weekend, mentioned allegations by former Davidians and by psychiatrists of child abuse by Koresh—his belief that even girls in their early teens were potential "wives" and the Davidians' practice of corporal punishment—but there was no evidence of ongoing abuse. However, sometime during the week of meetings with Reno, in which F.B.I. officials were addressing her reservations about an assault, someone from the Bureau had told Reno that children inside the compound were being abused. The Justice chronology reports that "someone had made a comment in one of the meetings that Koresh was beating babies." Reno had pressed the official ("I double-checked it," she later said), and got "the clear impression that, at some point since the F.B.I. had assumed command and control for the situation, they had learned that the Branch Davidians were beating babies."



In fact, the Department report states the opposite conclusion, noting that, because Koresh had been wounded in the February 28th shootout, his mobility was so restricted during the standoff that he would have been unable to abuse children sexually or physically even if he had been so inclined. Dr. Bruce Perry, chief of psychiatry at Texas Children's Hospital, was the head of the crisis team that took charge of the twenty-one children released from the Davidian compound during the standoff, and therefore knew as much as anyone on the outside about the likely condition of the children on the inside. During nearly two months of close evaluation of the children, Perry and his team probed for signs of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, and also for insights regarding life inside the compound which could be projected into assumptions about the possible outcome of the standoff. Perry found socialization problems with the children, but he concluded in his report that "the children released from Ranch Apocalypse do not appear to have been victims of sexual abuse" or of physical abuse severe enough to warrant state intervention.

Perplexed by Reno's insistence that the tear-gas assault was necessary to save the children, Perry later told me he could only conclude that Reno had been strongly urged toward that conclusion: "The F.B.I. maximized things they knew would ring a bell with her."

RENO had arrived in Washington with the reputation, perhaps unique among big-city prosecutors, of being a child advocate. As Dade County State Attorney, she was able to dictate policy on such difficult child-related crime issues as whether or not to recommend imprisonment for a drug-addicted mother. Her answer was no, because imprisonment would separate the child from its mother and thus, in Reno's view, accelerate the cycle of neglect and crime. In the mid-nineteen-eighties, Reno got so involved in the child-welfare issues created by the crack epidemic that she considered adopting a crack baby. (She decided her schedule was too demanding.) Her social-worker impulse led critics to nickname her Root Cause Reno, because of her insistence that crime was not committed by bad people but caused by dysfunctional homes. "She was more an advocate for juveniles than she was a traditional prosecutor," Seymour Gelber, her first boss in the Miami prosecutor's office, recalls.

This child motif, which has characterized Reno's public identity, grew out of rough, deeply felt experiences in her own childhood in the wild country at the edge of the Everglades. In fact, her family lived a nineteen-forties version of what might now be considered a crank survivalists' life style. Her father, Henry Reno, had been a legendary crime reporter at the Miami *Herald.* Her mother, Jane, was a lawyer's daughter who refused to become a Southern belle and, in rebelling against her family's expectations, opted for the bohemian literary life. She was genuinely eccentric. "I can still see Jane with Janet in her lap and a cigarette and a highball, saying, 'Now, don't upset mother's gin,'" an old newspaper friend named Jack E. Anderson recalled before his death last year. "She drank too much, and she would get argumentative. And she'd throw her shoes off and she'd get *down!*" In the early years of the marriage, the couple's home became a sort of salon for the young Miami newspaper set and assorted writers and artists. (One of Janet's most vivid early memories is of her mother sobbing beneath a banyan tree on the day of F.D.R.'s death. "Stories of Roosevelt were part and parcel of our upbringing," she recalled when I spoke with her in the fall of 1993.)

After the war, Jane and Henry bought twenty-one acres of land at the edge of the Everglades—a place so remote that the nearest store was five miles away. Jane decided to build a home, literally. She drew the plans, dug the foundation, and did much of the construction on a cracker-style house, which came to be known as Reno Ranch. The project took several years, and in the meantime the family lived in a small, ramshackle place that blended with its environment. "It was character-building," Janet's sister, Maggy, recalls. "There was no heat except for a smelly old kerosene stove. The wind blew through the cracks. You couldn't keep the mice out." In a time that for most kids was an era of rigid conventionality, the Renos' lives were utterly without it. As television was bringing images of idealized, "Donna Reed"

"I'll level with you, Charlie. I'm going to let money get in the way of our friendship."

• •

housewives presiding over pristine homes, theirs was handmade and permanently unfinished. (In its physical primitiveness, Reno Ranch had something in common with Ranch Apocalypse.) There were no doors to the bathrooms, and one day Jane just stopped working on the ceiling, leaving a section of it open to the rafters. Jane didn't believe in housework, and the place usually showed it. The few school friends who made the trek out to Reno Ranch were sometimes rudely treated.

When the children were still in grade school, Henry suddenly began to withdraw. He had often stayed out late, working or drinking, but increasingly he was not coming home at all. "I think he had a slight stroke," Janet recalled. "We've never been quite sure. . . . And that's when I was about in the fifth grade, and I think he started drinking more heavily after that. And he became more removed from about the time I was eleven."

After Henry Reno's departure, the children lived in a world created and ruled by Jane Reno. In most respects, she was a remarkably creative and devoted dictator. But Maggy, asked about stories suggesting that life with Jane could be somewhat difficult, responds, after prolonged laughter, "My mother was not 'somewhat difficult.' My mother could be *extremely* difficult!" Some of the ways in which Jane showed her individuality were plainly embarrassing: she swore; she didn't wear makeup or a bra; she didn't fix her hair or attend to her teeth, which eventually went bad and came out (not to be replaced by bridgework); and she drank. On one mortifyingly memorable occasion, the kids were called in the middle of the night by the Coral Gables Police Department, which had Jane in custody. She had passed out on the sidewalk. "She had walked away from a party," Maggy recalls, "and decided it was too late to bother the friend that she was going to see, so she curled up on the sidewalk and went to sleep. Whereupon she was awakened by a very huffy policeman and taken to the Coral Gables jail, where she proceeded to play 'Shave and a Haircut' on the plumbing until we came to get her."

The children sometimes felt the lash of Jane's sharp tongue, and often she gave her disapproval physical expression. She spanked her children, apparently quite hard, when they provoked her wrath; sometimes she used her hand, sometimes a switch, and sometimes she whipped them with a pony bridle.

When Janet was fourteen, she told her mother that she meant to become a lawyer one day. Her mother forbade it. But when Janet wanted to go to Cornell Jane sold off a piece of land to pay for her years there, and when Janet was accepted at Harvard Law School Jane "wept with joy," Janet recalled. Theirs was a powerful and complicated bond, and when Janet finished law school she returned home to live with her mother. Jane had not mellowed with age. Sara Smith remembers an incident that exemplified the value of forbearance regarding Jane. She and another friend went with Jane and Janet to see "The Belle of Amherst," the play about Emily Dickinson, who was Jane's favorite poet. "And at some point they had Julie Harris up there simpering into her handkerchief, and Jane, at the top of her lungs, said, 'Goddam it to hell! Emily Dickinson never simpered once in her entire life!' And, of course, every head ahead of me turned, except Janet's. Janet knew exactly where the outburst came from, knew exactly who it was. Now, Janet would not have apologized for her. Jane was Jane, and you handled it."

Friends sometimes cringe when Janet tells them about the whippings and Jane's other unpleasant behavior, and more than one acquaintance has characterized it as abuse. Janet, however, doesn't see it that way. "Mother loved us hard and she spanked us hard," she has often said, and when Jane died, in December, 1992, her eldest daughter conveyed in her eulogy the mixed passions that Jane inspired. "She could say 'I love you' better than anyone I know," Janet Reno said. "Even in the last days, as we came onto her porch she would say, 'Hello, my darling. I love you!' " But later in the eulogy Reno also noted, "I take some small comfort today in knowing that Mother will not insult anyone or embarrass the family. She was responsible for the most excruciating moments of my life."

From this intense and complicated growing up, Reno may have derived an impulse (said to be common among children of drinkers) to step into the breach. "Despite being a strong person who's very opposed to crime and injustice of all sorts," Janet McAliley, an old friend, says, "Janet is a rescuer."

Waco wasn't the first time Reno's concern for children may have affected her judgment. When she became state

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attorney in Dade County, her office became known for its prosecutions of cases involving alleged ritualistic sexual abuse of children in day care. Reno's office enlisted the services of two outside child-abuse specialists to question the children, using interview techniques that aimed at prompting disclosure. Although many of the children seemed reluctant to "disclose" the abuse, the interviewers eventually elicited from them horrifying tales of bizarre ritualistic abuses. Charges were brought, and convictions were obtained. One Satanic-ritual-abuse case involved a fourteen-year-old boy, Bobby Fijnje, who worked as a babysitter at a church. Again, specialists helped children "disclose," and a good number of the children at the church told tales of Bobby killing and eating babies, and leading naked dances around a campfire, witches flying, and eerie journeys to a cemetery where, one child said, Freddy Krueger came out of a grave. Much of this was said to have occurred during daytime services at a Presbyterian church in an affluent suburban neighborhood.

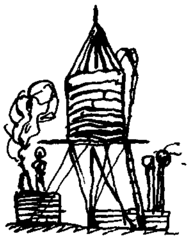
The jury in that case found Bobby Fijnje innocent, and he was freed, having spent a year and eight months in jail. Since then, of course, the whole phenomenon of ritual-abuse cases has been cast into doubt by developmental research experts who have discovered that merely questioning a child repeatedly about an alleged incident can convince the child that the incident occurred. Stephen Ceci, of Cornell University, who has studied this syndrome, called "confirmatory bias," says that it is often exhibited by child advocates whose willingness to believe in child abuse hinders objective analysis. It seems clear that in at least some child-abuse investigations the chief problems the children face are those created by the insistence of well-meaning rescuers.

THE "rescue" attempted with Bradley tanks and tear gas near Waco came to the apocalyptic end that David Koresh had predicted. A monumental policy failure that bore Janet Reno's signature, it might well have ended her career. Instead, oddly, it made her a national hero.

The Clinton Presidency had by then revealed its essentially equivocal nature, and enabled Reno to distinguish herself merely by refusing to dodge. Just hours after the raid, Reno held a televised press conference in which she declared, "I made the decision. I am accountable. The buck stops here." She repeated that mantra over and over—on "MacNeil/Lehrer," "Larry King Live," and "Nightline"—and the effect was transcendent. Before the site of the Davidians' incineration had cooled enough to allow a body count, Reno was well into a remarkable metamorphosis from "awkward old maid" to political heroine. There was something so unlikely, so unexpected, about the way Reno welcomed responsiblity for Waco that in claiming the tragic failure she achieved a stunning success; overnight, she became by far the most popular member of the Clinton Administration. Reno's non-style style betokened substance, and created a kind of anti-slick vogue. She mispronounced Ted Koppel's name, and the Beltway crowd chuckled approvingly. She refused the ministrations of television makeup artists, and feminists lauded a new role model. Barbra Streisand stopped by for lunch. There was even speculation about her future on a national ticket.

One of the effects of Reno's sudden popularity was that the national appetite for serious inquiry into Waco became blunted. Representative Patricia Schroeder, Democrat of Colorado, voiced the prevailing sentiment in Washington when she told Reno, "You've raised the responsibility and accountability of public service to an incredibly high level in a way we've never seen before." Democrats, then in control of Congress, were not eager to launch a probe that might embarrass the Administration, and Senator McCain notes, "Frankly, I never heard any groundswell Republican demand for a hearing, either. . . . I think you could make a case that both parties in Congress, especially in the Senate, may have been somewhat derelict in their duties."

The Administration ordered the Justice Department investigation, which produced a three-hundred-and-forty-eight-page report on Waco that managed to find no fault on the part of any Justice employee, from Reno on down through the ranks of the F.B.I. Among the questions that remained unanswered, however, were some that implied serious malfeasance. Who told the Attorney General that there was ongoing child abuse? And was the misrepresentation intentional? ("I remember it specifically," Webb Hubbell told me, "but I can't remember who said it.") Reno herself told me that she didn't remember who the person was. The F.B.I. pumped tear gas into the compound periodically during the first hours of the assault—until the supply of gas was exhausted. Then agents sent to Houston for more, and exhausted that supply, too. Was the Attorney General informed that the gas put children at the risk of, as Dr. Alan Stone discovered on his own, "fulminating chemical pneumonia and death"? Or that infants do not have the lung capacity to use gas masks? Was Reno aware, in approving the plan to save the children, that gas packets, fired from a grenade launcher, could penetrate wooden doors and explode inside? Did Reno really mean to present the Davidians with the choice of surrendering or watching their children die? The plan that Reno is alleged to have approved was to have been "passive"; that is, the agents were to have inserted gas into a portion of the compound and then retreated and awaited evacuees before approaching again. This restrained approach was supposed to have been followed for as long as three days, but it lasted just twelve minutes. The operation then escalated: walls were breached and the door was knocked down. Was the deviation from the plan warranted? Or was it an overreaction?



By the time the Justice Department report appeared, in the fall of 1993, attention had long since turned from Waco to Whitewater, health care, and other issues. Meanwhile, Waco festered. "People like the militia have a whole bunch of crazy ideas," Dr. Stone says. "However, they have two pieces of truth in all the craziness. One is 'Look at what happened at Waco. And the government hid its mistakes and concealed its misdeeds.' And the other piece of truth is that the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms made this attack on Waco because Koresh's followers had guns. And the militias have guns. So the militias have these two kernels of truth in all their craziness about our government: Waco, and the fear that the government will come after them because they have guns."

Although the mainstream media quickly forgot Waco, the event was kept alive in the eddies outside the mainstream—the fax networks, talk radio, C-SPAN call-in shows, and the Internet. That is how Senator McCain began to realize that the issue was gaining its own, potentially monstrous life: "I can tell you that we have had a lot of mail, a lot of phone calls, and a lot of times when I've been on the talk shows and people have brought that up, and it has surprised me—the legs that this story has."

In the days following the Waco event, Reno termed it "one of the great tragedies of our time." When we talked about it in the late fall of that year, she was still clearly pained by the results of the miscalculation she had endorsed. "One of the tragedies is that we'll never know," she said. "What was the right thing to do?" She told me she still didn't believe she had been misled. Privately, however, she appears to have harbored suspicions.

"I don't think Janet would ever publicly criticize agencies," says Sandy D'Alemberte, one of Reno's early Florida mentors and a close friend. "But I think she learned something of the perils of dealing with people who may not always give you full assessments. She took responsibility for the decisions, but, boy, she just felt awful about those kids."

That is Reno's lasting share of the Waco tragedy, whose horror is still unspooling in unimagined ways two years later. When authorities arrested Francisco Duran last fall for spraying gunfire at the White House, they found a bumper sticker on his truck that read, "Fire Butch Reno." Timothy McVeigh (who is being held in an Oklahoma town called, as it happens, El Reno), was, of course, a Waco pilgrim, and ever since the Oklahoma bombing overt threats on Reno's life have markedly increased. Both Reno and President Clinton have denied any rational connection between Waco and Oklahoma, and they are right; the connection is not rational. But it is real, and the echo from Waco heard in Oklahoma can only heighten the personal tragedy of the devoted child advocate who once sent tanks and tear gas on a mission to save the children. ♦

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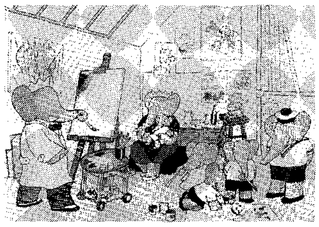

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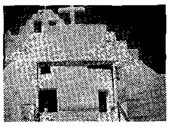

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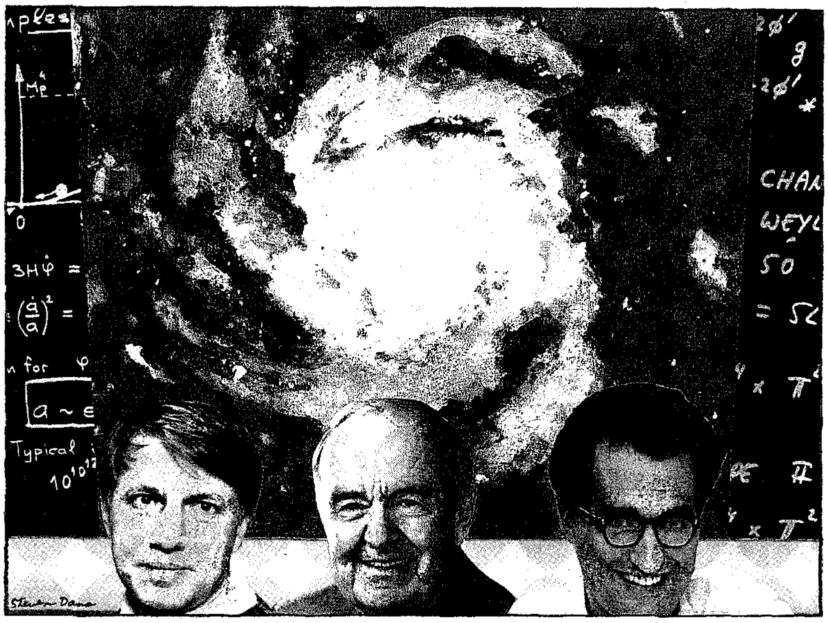
ASTRONOMICAL NOTEBOOK

MINDS AND MATTER

What's a few billion years among friends? Plenty, when cosmologists and physicists are talking about the universe.

BY TIMOTHY FERRIS

THE fate of the universe hung in the balance, as it so often does these days, when a hundred physicists got together at Johns Hopkins University recently to talk cosmology. On the agenda were the usual issues, such as whether black holes exist and whether everything in creation is made of tiny "strings" that are themselves shards of space. But there was also fresh concern about the age of the universe. New observations made with the once myopic but now sharp-eyed Hubble Space Telescope indicated that the universe is half as old as had been thought—indeed, that it is younger than some of the stars in it, an obvious absurdity. This paradoxical state of affairs had prompted some researchers to assert that the big-bang theory, the world's regnant cosmology, was in trouble.



Big thinkers: Andrei Linde, Allan Sandage, Edward Witten.

STEVEN DANA

Making a model of the universe is like trying to pitch a tent on a moonless night in a howling Arctic wind. The tent is theory. The wind is experiment. Progress is made whenever a tent peg proves sturdy enough to hold. Einstein's account of gravity, known as the general theory of relativity, is one such peg. It's still firmly in place, having survived eighty years of scrutiny and experimental testing. The fact that the universe expands—that intergalactic space is stretching, carrying vast clusters of galaxies apart from one another at velocities directly proportional to the distances separating them—is another sturdy peg. It has been repeatedly verified since its discovery, in 1929, by the American astronomer Edwin P. Hubble. But just how fast does it expand? In other words, how much time has passed since the universe began? That peg had begun to feel as loose as a doomed tooth.

No one expected a clear answer to emerge from the conference. In science, all is provisional; as the American physicist Richard Feynman once put it, "The scientist has a lot of experience with ignorance and doubt and uncertainty . . . we take it for granted that it is perfectly consistent to be unsure." But there was hope of learning something useful, especially given a roster of speakers which included Edward Witten, the string-theory wizard widely said to possess the most acute scientific intellect since Einstein; Andrei Linde, the Russian cosmologist who theorizes that our universe is just one among many; and Allan Sandage, the astronomer who has done more than anyone else alive to chart the size and age of the universe.

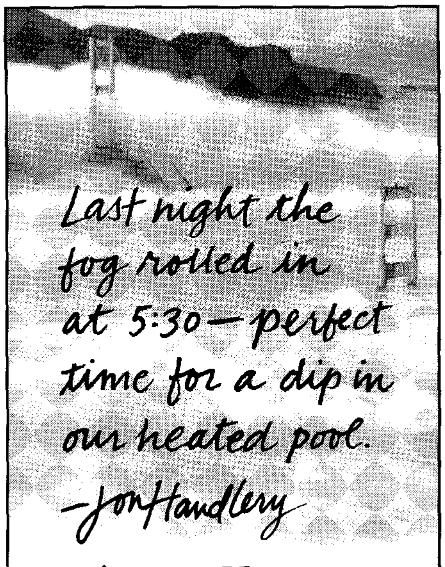
On the first day the physicists arrived, a gaggle of men and a few women dressed in combinations of khakis and sweaters and pristine white running shoes united by a common willingness to turn their backs on a splendid bronze-and-blue early-spring morning and file into the Norman I. Schafler Auditorium of the Henry A. Rowland Department of Physics and Astronomy. Here most would sit, seven hours a day, for the next four days, stirring themselves every few hours to sip tea and munch apple-spice granola bars in the atrium during breaks, talking more physics all the while. It was to be a kind of Long Attention Span Theatre.

THE morning session was devoted to neutrinos, exotic subatomic particles that fly through space at approximately the velocity of light. The existence of neutrinos was postulated in 1930 by the theoretical physicist Wolfgang Pauli, who said, "I have committed the ultimate sin, I have predicted the existence of a particle that can never be observed." Nevertheless, scientists have been able to detect a few. They mount optical detectors on the walls of a big tank full of ultrapure water buried deep underground, where few other particles can penetrate to contaminate the signal. There they wait for the telltale flash of light produced when an occasional neutrino deigns to plow directly into the nucleus of one of the atoms in the water. Graduate students have spent years in gold mines and salt mines, searching for signs of the neutrinos they knew to be all around them. Neutrinos are of interest cosmologically in part because of theories suggesting that some varieties of neutrinos possess mass. If so they might be the "dark matter" thought to constitute more than nine-tenths of the weight of the universe but as yet unobserved. Six physicists told the conference that efforts to detect neutrino mass remain inconclusive.

The highlight that afternoon was a talk by Sandage, a lively figure whose pale blue eyes have scrutinized more galaxies than there are names for. Some astronomers are made, having migrated to the field from physics or mathematics. Sandage is a born astronomer. At age eleven he used to stand under the Ohio skies at twilight, waiting to catch sight of the first star. ("Why?" he wonders today. "Why was it important to be there to see Vega appear?") He apprenticed under Hubble. Nearly half a century of research at mountaintop observatories in the United States, Chile, and Australia has persuaded him that the big bang took place about fifteen billion years ago. He takes this conclusion seriously. The big, old universe is not a theory to him; it is the way things really are. The small, young universe now being put forth is not an interesting alternative; it is an affront to his integrity as an intergalactic cartographer.

In magisterial style, Sandage summarized the arguments of the Young Turks who make up the Hubble team of investigators. (There are fourteen of them, led by the thirty-seven-year-old Wendy Freedman. It is a curiosity of this controversy that the old universe is championed by the sixty-eight-year-old Sandage, and the young universe mostly by younger astronomers.) He noted that since none of the Young Turks was present, "I have to talk out of both sides of my mouth here." He accused them of falling victim to a variety of errors that, when corrected, would return the universe to an age greater than that of the oldest stars. "There is no crisis," he concluded. "I do not believe the standard model is in trouble." Sandage was persuasive but the physicists seemed unmoved. They abide in the tents of theory, and know how hard the winds can blow.

The next day we heard from Witten, the superman of strings. He does not often show up at conferences, but this was, after all, a PASCOS symposium. The acronym stands for Particles, Strings, and Cosmology, and it designates what many expect will mark a physics watershed. Particles are the dimensionless points—quarks and leptons—that make up the material world as viewed by quantum-field theory. Strings are the tiny, vibrating bits of hyperdimensional space that allegedly will turn out to comprise the particles. Elegant as a Bach



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—Jon Handlery

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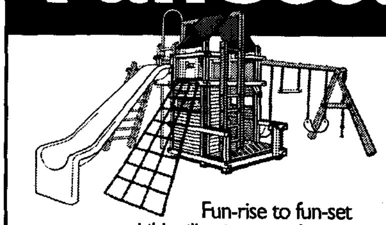

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partita, string theory promises to unify quantum physics with Einstein's relativity, shedding light on the origin of the universe in the bargain. (Since strings are made of space, string theory's reply to the riddle of how everything could have come from nothing is that, in a sense, everything is nothing.) But string theory is unfinished, and so dauntingly difficult that nobody yet knows how to solve it all. Witten likes to say that string theory is "part of the physics of the twenty-first century that fell by chance into the twentieth century."

Witten is regarded in the physics community with a respect verging on awe. Others calculate; Witten stares out the window and thinks. What he thinks about more than anything else is hyperdimensional geometry—about how our universe may have begun in, say, ten dimensions, six of which collapsed at the outset to leave behind the four (three dimensions of space plus one of time) in which we live today. This sort of thing was not always Witten's concern. Before turning to science he was a history major. He worked in George McGovern's Presidential campaign. He picked up physics along the way.

Witten is a tall, boyish-looking man with a mild face and a penchant for standing still. He spoke softly, in a high-pitched voice, floating short, precise sentences that were as light and agile as model biplanes. He interposed witty little silences between them. It's the speech pattern of a man who knows that he thinks too fast to be understood otherwise. "I'm going to mention seven dimensions because the equations are easy," he said, "but what I'm going to say is true in any number of dimensions." He continued in this vein for perhaps ten minutes, then stopped, in the middle of his talk, to ask if there were any questions. Thirty seconds of dead silence ensued. Then from out of the gloom came a question. Witten lapsed into a faintly pitying smile and replied by correcting the query. "There is no one over G squared for eleven-dimensional supergravity," he reminded his interrogator. More silence followed. Witten resumed with a Martini-dry jest: "I started in five dimensions in part because if the answer were nonsense that might explain why we live in four dimensions." After concluding his talk, he again asked for questions. This time, there were no takers.

CEASEFIRE

I
Put in mind of his own father and moved to tears
Achilles took him by the hand and pushed the old king
Gently away, but Priam curled up at his feet and
Wept with him until their sadness filled the building.

II
Taking Hector's corpse into his own hands Achilles
Made sure it was washed and, for the old king's sake,
Laid out in uniform, ready for Priam to carry
Wrapped like a present home to Troy at daybreak.

III
When they had eaten together, it pleased them both
To stare at each other's beauty as lovers might—
Achilles built like a god, Priam good-looking still
And full of conversation, who earlier had sighed,

IV
"I get down on my knees and do what must be done
And kiss Achilles' hand, the killer of my son."

—Michael Longley

Talking with Witten during the break, I tried not to be intimidated, but that proved difficult. Witten's veneer of ordinariness is as transparent as fresh varnish, and as we talked I soon found myself struggling against the claustrophobic sensation that he was studying me, that with each passing minute he knew me twice as well as he had the minute before, and that he would soon be anticipating my questions as well as providing the answers.

I asked him about the widespread opinion that string theory may be too radical to understand and too extreme to test experimentally. This view has more than knee-jerk conservatism going for it. To test string theory in a straightforward manner would require re-creating the conditions of the early big bang, when prevailing energy levels were far above what can be attained in any particle accelerator now, or in the conceivable future.

"For string theory to turn out to be wrong would be unprecedented in the history of science," Witten said. He waited patiently, watching me write in my notebook and peering at what I was writing. "What one finds, historically, are not ideas that made sense but were wrong. Usually, people stare around helplessly for years before a reasonable idea comes down the pike. When a theory is fantastically beautiful and physical—and string theory is—I don't find it plausible that it would be wrong." As for experimental tests of the theory, he noted, science today routinely investigates gravity waves, black holes, and other ideas that "were like science fiction" when they were first put forth. "People who predict that something cannot be tested are begging to be proved wrong by some combination of experiment and theory they can't foresee.

"Don't stop," he said, putting his right index finger on my notebook and adding, "And the unforeseeable is the most important aspect of that. The preoccupation of physics from about 1920 to about 1970 was field theory. That was fifty years. It might take us that long to work out string theory, which is less than thirty years old."

The next morning we heard from Andrei Linde, whose ideas are innovative even by the standards of Russian theoretical physics. While most cosmologists are content to study the universe in which we find ourselves, with its hundred billion galaxies arrayed across three hundred billion billion light-years of expanding space, Linde proposes that it is but a tiny piece of the big picture. He thinks it formed as a bubble—a kind of runaway aneurysm—that ballooned out of the space of a prior universe. There are, he hypothesizes, many more universes, perhaps an infinite number of them. The material world originated not with "our" big bang but with the first big bang, which probably happened an infinitely long time ago. "The big bang remains a very interesting theory that we must study, but it is somewhere in the distant past," he told the audience. He called the origin of our bubble universe "not *the* big bang, but a pretty big bang."

Linde once studied oil painting. He illustrated his talk with vivid color graphics, produced on a Silicon Graphics computer by Linde and his son Dmitri, in which bristling bundles of spikes represent the "pretty big bangs" that mark the creation of various universes. One especially spectacular display he called "a Kandinsky universe." The universes, he proposed, look finite in size from the outside but look infinite to those living inside them. "Domain walls" made of curved space separate universes. "If you go there, you encounter a boundary," he remarked. "You cross the boundary, you die. So you don't want to go there."

The thrust of Linde's talk was to demonstrate that his theory, which had been based on the old-universe model, would also work should the universe prove to be younger than had been thought. A questioner asked whether this didn't make his already highly speculative theory even more speculative, in that it could now accommodate more than one value for the age of our universe.

"It depends on who's talking," Linde replied. "The person who lives in a country that has a lot of freedom wants to have one general rule. The person who lives in a country where there is one general rule wants to have lots of freedom."

Linde came to the United States in 1990, when Stanford University offered faculty positions to both him and his wife, Renata Kallosh—a sunny and poised mother of two, who is a physicist of exceptional resourcefulness. (Her specialty is quantum gravity, which may or may not turn out to be a version of string theory.) As we sat and talked in a daffodil garden outside the hall, he recalled that Renata was doing research as a visiting theorist at CERN, the high-energy-physics laboratory on the border of France and Switzerland, when the offer came in, via E-mail. "Renata turned to a French friend who was sitting at a terminal nearby and asked, 'What is this Stanford?' " he said. He smiled and shook his head. "We *came* from another universe."

As we got up to go back inside, Linde volunteered that he is sometimes troubled by the radicalism of his own theories. "Maybe God is fooling me," he said, as if thinking the matter over afresh. "Maybe He tells me something that looks like fun, that looks like I am rewarded, for what I don't know, so that I've got this nice understanding of how the universe was built, but in the end I will discover that I was fooled myself and I was fooling other people by saying that I know how the universe was produced. Maybe I am too proud right now. Maybe actually the solution is absolutely quite aside from what we're thinking about. It is a very dangerous feeling, this feeling that you're not totally secure in what you're doing. But it makes life so exciting."

BACK in the auditorium, Renata Kallosh gave a talk on how "extreme black holes" created in the original, ten-dimensional universe would behave like subatomic particles. This sort of research is of considerable interest, since, if string theory is right about everything's being made of tiny strings of compressed space, then subatomic particles are, in effect, miniature black holes. "They start splitting and have their own life," she said, flashing a cheerful smile. "They are stable and they possess 'superhair.' " "Hair" is physicists' jargon for the information about what is inside a black hole which can be adduced by an observer outside. For garden-variety black holes made of dead stars, this information is restricted to mass, rotation, and electrical charge; beyond those three quantities we on the outside cannot ascertain whether the black hole grew to its present mass by eating simple things, like stars, or complex things, like libraries. The bald exterior presented by ordinary black holes is denoted by the adage "Black holes have no hair." It troubles researchers, because, by eliminating information

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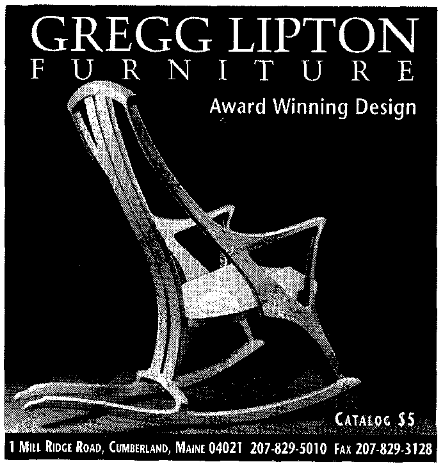

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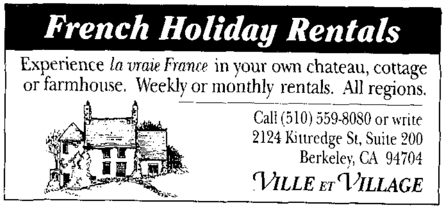

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forever, it evidently violates the law of entropy. But, Kallosh said, extreme black holes have lots of hair. She illustrated this concept with a sketch by her husband showing a man with male-pattern baldness, labelled "Hair," alongside a punk rocker with a spiked hairdo, labelled "Superhair."

Kallosh added, ominously, that some extreme black holes can detonate, releasing three hundred times the energy of a nuclear fission bomb. Her overhead slide presenting the relevant equations for a "BLACK GRAVITATIONAL BOMB" contained the parenthetical note "(hopefully, not realistic)."

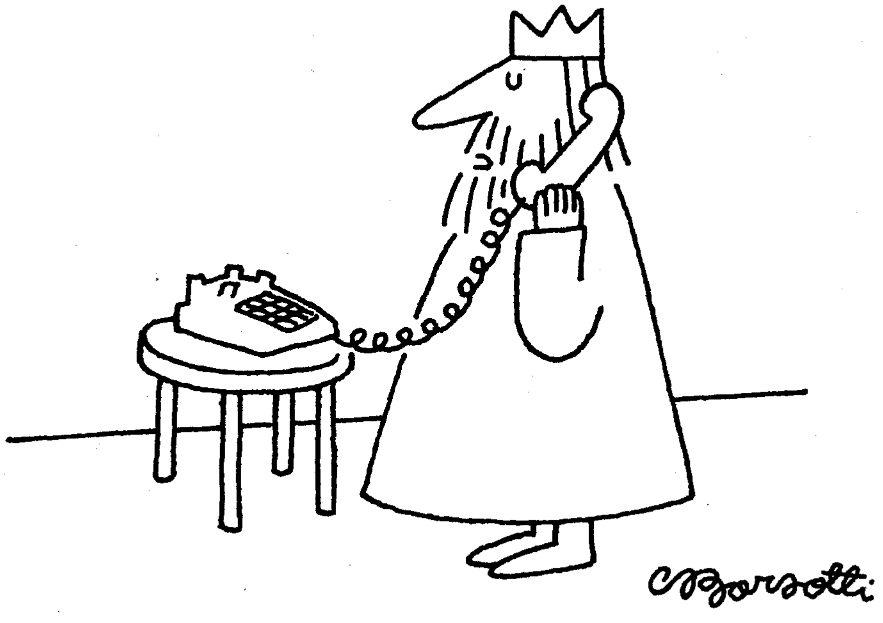
Kallosh's exploration of the frontiers of theoretical physics was followed by a relatively down-to-earth report that black holes really do exist. This served as a bracing reminder that radicalism in pursuit of a sound cosmology is no vice—given that, as the British geneticist J. B. S. Haldane used to say, "the universe is not only queerer than we suppose, but queerer than we *can* suppose." Half a century has passed since J. Robert Oppenheimer and his student Hartland Snyder calculated that the collapse of a giant star could form a black hole in space. For much of that time, the idea was derided as a particularly outrageous example of theoretics run wild. Now Mario Livio, of the Space Telescope Science Institute in Baltimore, was reviewing what he called "observational evidence of the actual existence of black holes in the sky." He displayed a Hubble image of the center of the galaxy NGC 4261. It showed a glowing doughnut of gas and dust with a hellish-looking funnel of white-hot material jetting out of its center—exactly what one would expect if, as the theorists predicted long ago, there were a massive black hole there. He presented data indicating that the core of the galaxy NGC 4258 contains a small black object as massive as forty million suns. He concluded, "We can actually say that yes, black holes have been observed."

On my way out of town, I stopped in the Westminster Presbyterian churchyard to leave a small bottle of cognac at the tomb of Edgar Allan Poe. When Poe completed "Eureka," his vision of cosmology, in 1848, he was broke, as usual, and was beset by premonitions of his impending death (which came the next year, following a drinking binge). He knew little of science beyond what he had absorbed from popular books like the Reverend John Pringle Nichol's "Views on the Architecture of the Heavens," yet he claimed that "Eureka" solved the riddle of the universe. Cosmology today is a science, which is to say that it takes seriously only those ideas based on quantitative logic and at least potentially vulnerable to experimental test. It confers no medals on those who merely happen to guess the right answer first. Still, for an amateur writing at a time when the very term "scientist" was a green-twig neologism, Poe did pretty well. He portrayed the cosmos as an evolutionary system, finite in space and time (concepts today embodied in the big-bang model), and as built on hyperdimensional geometry (which is the basis of both general relativity and string theory). He demanded that "Eureka" be published in an edition of no fewer than fifty thousand, and that he receive a large advance. He got fourteen dollars, and the book failed to sell out its initial press run of five hundred copies.

"Eureka" has been denounced by scientists and critics alike as the nonsensical product of a mind warped by opprobrium, opium, and alcohol. Yet it keeps cropping up, and has even tiptoed into the scientific literature. On returning home to San Francisco, I found waiting for me a copy of Sandage's new book, "The Carnegie Atlas of Galaxies"—a huge two-volume tome, the latest and most authoritative work in the field. In its first chapter Sandage notes that scientific research is generally interpreted as involving induction, the unprejudiced gathering of data, championed by Francis Bacon, and deduction, the process of pure reasoning emphasized by Aristotle. "But how do we begin?" Sandage asks. If we start with pure induction, we have no way of knowing which data to gather, since we don't know which, by the lights of a guiding theory, will turn out to be relevant. And if we start with pure deduction we are isolated from nature—which is pretty much where all human thought about nature remained trapped prior to the rise of science. The way out of the dilemma, Sandage proposes, is to break the closed loop of induction-deduction. And here he mentions Poe's "Eureka."

"Poe dismissed the methods of both Bacon and Aristotle as the paths to certain knowledge," Sandage writes. "He argued for a third method to knowledge which he called imagination; we now call it intuition. . . . Imagination, or genius, or intuition, lets the classification start so that the successive iterations, back and forth between the empirical and the rational, hone the product until it eventually conforms to nature. Only then is the dross of the classifier skimmed away and a true order in nature, if it exists, revealed."

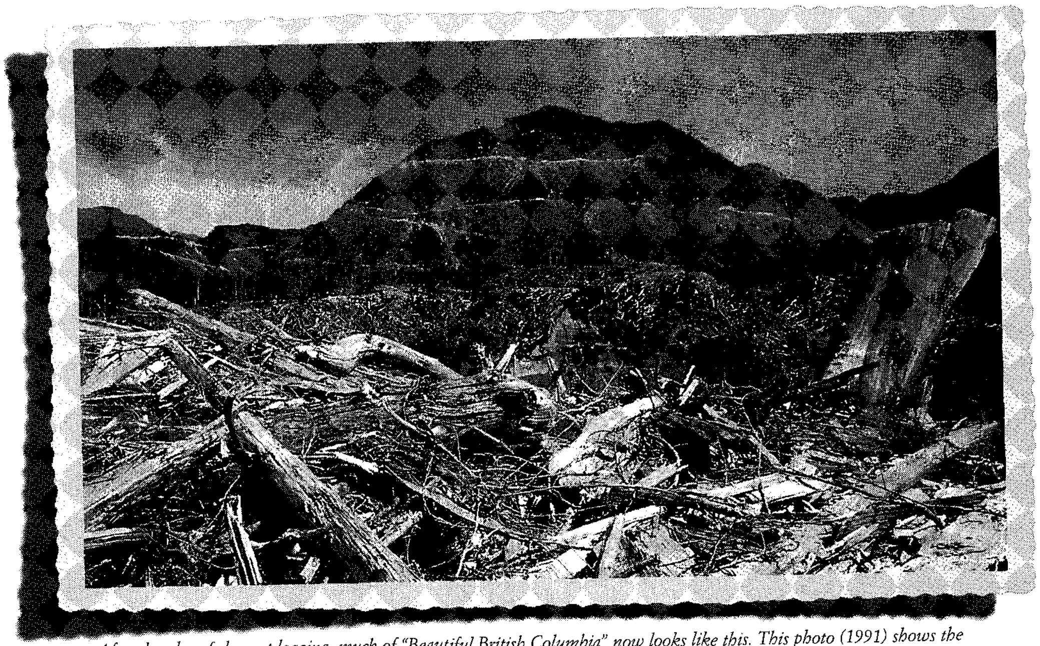
Sandage concludes with a credo: "Simply start, and like Poe, trust in the imagination." ♦



"Le roi s'amuse. Now put your father on the phone."

VISIT BEAUTIFUL BRITISH COLUMBIA

Picnic in the clearcut forests. Hike the eroded hillsides. See the dried-up salmon streams.



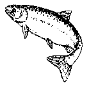
After decades of clearcut logging, much of "Beautiful British Columbia" now looks like this. This photo (1991) shows the "beautiful" Escalante River Valley in Clayoquot Sound. A new law purports to outlaw devastation on this scale, yet it still permits smaller clearcuts scattered over a larger area. The effect on B.C.'s forests and biodiversity is nearly identical.

We are a coalition of environmental groups who all love British Columbia and its once magnificent wilderness. We have been fighting for more than two decades to help protect U.S., Canadian and other forests in the world from a juggernaut of massive clearcutting.

Over half the earth's temperate rainforests are already gone. In the contiguous U.S., *90 percent has been cut.* But on Vancouver Island and the mainland coast of British Columbia, there still remain some of the world's last intact stretches of magnificent ancient rainforest. *They may not remain standing for long.*

ROOSEVELT ELK

MARBLED MURRELET



COHO SALMON

The crown jewel of Vancouver Island is Clayoquot Sound: 670,000 acres of nearly pristine wilderness forest and beach along the Pacific, with deep fjords, high alpine meadows, and steep slopes of Douglas fir, Sitka spruce and hemlock. This is one of North America's richest ecological systems, and yet it's easily accessible. It's home to at least 4,500 species of sea and land flora and fauna; 5 species of Pacific salmon; 2 species of whales and many other sea mammals; migrating waterfowl and shorebirds; wolves, cougars and bears.

"Ecotourism" is a major industry here, and it's growing. So is salmon fishing. *But, if the presently planned clearcuts of Clayoquot Sound are completed, there will be such devastation that you won't want to visit this place.* Originally, Clayoquot Sound contained 415,000 acres of temperate rainforest. Over 20 percent of that has already been clearcut. Current plans are to log *54 percent more,* while saving "beauty strips" at the water's edge, to hide the truth from tour boats.

The Canadian public is appalled at what is happening, though it's been unable to stop it. Recent polls show that 67 percent of Canadians oppose clearcutting, and 61 percent of British Columbia residents want to ban all clearcutting in B.C. Still a handful of giant corporations, led by MacMillan Bloedel, continue to mow down the great ancient forests: *120,000 acres per year.*

The root causes of the crisis can be located on both sides of the U.S.-Canadian border. Half of the B.C. rainforest timber exports are used in the U.S. for phone books, newsprint and other throwaway products, and lumber.

On the Canadian side — both the federal and provincial governments promised to do better than their predecessors and to halt the assault on the forests. But they are not bringing change fast enough — not with Clayoquot Sound in the balance. We need your help.

First, you can support the campaign against U.S. use of newsprint and timber from B.C.'s ancient temperate rainforests. Second, you can let the American and Canadian governments know you're involved. The coupon below will tell you how. Thank you.

INTERNATIONAL COALITION TO SAVE BRITISH COLUMBIA'S FORESTS

Biodiversity Associates • Clearcut Education Project • Earth Island Institute • Ecoforestry Institute – U.S. • Ecoropa • Estonian Green Movement • Environmental Protection Information Center • Friends of the Earth – Netherlands • Friends of the Earth – U.S. • Forest Guardians • Greater Ecosystem Alliance • Heartwood • Japan Tropical Forest Action Network • Mendocino Environmental Center • Native Forest Council • Oregon Natural Resources Council • Pacific Environment & Resources Center • Rainforest Action Network • Reforesting Scotland • RESTORE: The North Woods • Save America's Forests • Swedish Society for Nature Conservation • Superior Wilderness Action Network • Tartu Nature Protection Organization • Wildlands Project

Mail to: International Coalition to Save British Columbia's Forests
c/o Rainforest Action Network, 450 Sansome St., San Francisco, CA 94111

○ Please send details on how I can help save the ancient forests of Clayoquot Sound.

○ Send me a list of government, corporate and tourist offices to write to. Also, a list of forest products made from B.C. timber.

○ Here is a tax-deductible donation to help fight this cause ___ $25 ___ $50 ___ $100
Other: $____ [Please make checks payable to RAN]

Name ____________________

Address ____________________

PHOTO: GARTH LENZ

A REPORTER AT LARGE

MASTER OF ILLUSION

Maurice Saatchi built Saatchi & Saatchi into the world's biggest advertising agency, only to watch it slide toward bankruptcy. Then an upstart shareholder forced his ouster, and Maurice launched his most devastating campaign yet.

BY STEPHEN SCHIFF

THERE is a joke told in London business circles that when a company is about to fall apart it first moves into a building with an atrium. The film-production firm Goldcrest is cited, and so, more recently, is Saatchi & Saatchi P.L.C., which was once the largest advertising conglomerate in the world. The atrium joke is a pin-striped version of "Pride goeth before a fall," or, to employ a phrase that the newly deposed company chairman Maurice Saatchi is fond of, "Nemesis follows hubris." The sentiment is one that the English, with their predilection for keeping things and people in their proper place, are drawn to: you are what you are, what you were born to be; erect an atrium that advertises otherwise, and the Fates will reduce you to dust.

The Saatchi & Saatchi atrium rises in the center of an immense and immensely expensive granite building that covers the entire south side of London's Berkeley Square. The floors at ground level are of marble—white streaked with butterscotch. There are palms everywhere and exposed elevators that you can watch going up and down, as though you were in a Hyatt Hotel or an upscale shopping mall; it used to be said that the automatic voice announcing the floors sounded uncannily like that of Maurice Saatchi himself. Until a year ago, the top floor housed the offices of Maurice Saatchi and his older brother, Charles: the former known for his business strategies and his beguiling way with C.E.O.s and Tory lords; the latter for his prodigious art collection, his volatility, and his reputed command of what admen call, not always very accurately, "creativity." Their offices were done in a style that might be described as opulent minimalism: they were dazzling in their whiteness and sense of space. Even when hard times hit and the rest of the company moved to the tattier quarters, on Charlotte Street, that housed their subsidiary agency, the founding brothers held on to their Berkeley Square aerie. They finally decamped to Charlotte Street in the spring of 1994, and then only at the urgent suggestion of their board of directors. On the sixth floor, at a cost of several hundred thousand dollars, they had a new suite of offices erected for themselves, which turned out to be almost identical to the old ones. They were dazzling in their whiteness and sense of space.

Illusion had always been central to the Saatchi brothers' vision. "From the day the advertising agency started, when we had only eleven people, we tried to look grander than we were," Maurice Saatchi says. At their height, of course, they were very grand indeed. No mere advertising business had ever been so famous. The name itself, with its copulating "a"s and untraceable ethnicity, had a mysterious allure—half sturdy Saab, half decadent Häagen-Dazs. And, after the Saatchis helped engineer the victory of Margaret Thatcher in the 1979 election and again in 1983 and 1987, it became something of a household brand in Britain—the name of the Tories' admen. It looked handsome in big black letters on the granite façade in Berkeley Square, and the Saatchis paid a considerable annual sum to keep it there, though the building's actual main tenant was (and remains) Glaxo, a pharmaceutical company many times larger than Saatchi & Saatchi ever was.

The name is up there still, but now the illusion is complete. On December 16, 1994, under pressure from a large group of shareholders led by a thirty-three-year-old Chicago fund manager named David Herro, the board of Saatchi & Saatchi P.L.C. ousted Maurice from his position as chairman (which he had held since 1985) and director. They offered him a job chairing Saatchi & Saatchi Advertising Worldwide, one of two huge advertising networks that operate under the Saatchi banner (Bates Worldwide is the other), and Maurice considered the offer over the Christmas holidays. On January 3, 1995, he turned it down, rather puckishly, in a two-line memo to the company's secretary: "Please inform Mr. Herro that I do not accept his offer. It was kind of him to consider me for the position." Almost immediately, Saatchi & Saatchi was rocked by a wave of disasters: clients bolting in protest, senior executives resigning, the stock price skittering downward. Maurice, meanwhile, set up a new company on the third floor of a drab little building a few blocks north of Berkeley Square. The name on the buzzer was Dress Rehearsal, Inc., but everyone in the ad business knew it as the New Saatchi Agency.

The New Saatchi offices are a far cry from Berkeley Square. They have low ceilings and cheap carpeting and the kind of black-painted desks that you can buy by the dozen from an office-supply firm. They resemble nothing so much as an H&R Block branch around tax time. Maurice Saatchi thinks that the rulers of the old company would probably like this place. "Their view was that it was important to look shabby to please the shareholders," he says. "Well, you can have some very happy shareholders, but if you don't have any clients you *will* be living in shabby circumstances, because you're not going to have any income."

The New Saatchi's income has just been guaranteed—at least for the coming year. On May 2nd, after weeks of bitterly vying with his former company and two other agencies, Maurice and his upstart firm won a yearlong contract to advertise for British Airways—one of the most prestigious accounts in the world. The big loser in the competition was the

34.

Maurice Saatchi, photographed by Richard Avedon in London, March 17, 1995.

old Saatchi & Saatchi. It had handled British Airways' advertising since 1983, and the airline's departure was widely seen as a punishment for Maurice's deposal. Edward Wax, the C.E.O. of Saatchi & Saatchi Advertising Worldwide, told the New York *Times*, "We believe this is the last shoe to drop." But around the old Saatchi offices on Charlotte Street it had been raining footwear practically all year. With the B.A. defection (and the defection of B.A.'s partner airline Qantas, a day later), more than half a billion dollars in billings had been lost, amounting to about sixty-eight million dollars in revenue.

In America, at least, the forced removal of chairmen has lately become as much a part of corporate fashion as tasselled loafers: in recent years, the heads of such companies as American Express, General Motors, Eastman Kodak, Morrison Knudsen, and K mart have all been deposed. As a rule, companies that sacrifice a strong leader to the demands of angry shareholders unwittingly make themselves vulnerable to collapse. But the case of Maurice Saatchi and his stock-picking Fury, David Herro, doesn't follow any of the rules. It seems a simple story at first, of a self-righteous young American flexing his fiduciary muscles by bringing down an English giant—with hell to pay. But there is more here than meets the eye. For, if Herro and the old Saatchi have made a terrible mistake, they nevertheless have complex and even persuasive reasons for having done so. And, as brilliant as Maurice Saatchi has proved himself to be over the years, he can also be accused of having cultivated the seeds of his own overthrow. This is a story not only of two feuding businessmen but of two irreconcilable ways of looking at the world.

At forty-eight, Maurice Saatchi is tall and stiletto-like, with thin, determined lips and an air of latent mischief. He has been known to wear showy scarves and Comme des Garçons suits to greet staid City bankers, but his most flamboyant item of apparel is his enormous tortoiseshell eyeglasses, which look as though they might not only correct myopia but also provide X-ray vision and maybe shoot poison darts should the occasion arise. Behind them, the eyes are watchful and enigmatic, and they crinkle in a sprightly way that is powerfully reminiscent of Michael Caine. Although Maurice is reserved and rather shy, he is known as the less reclusive of the Saatchi brothers—but then almost anybody would be reckoned less reclusive than Charles, who shuns large public gatherings, rarely sees clients (he has yet to meet Margaret Thatcher), has never attended an Annual General Meeting, or even a meeting of the board, and is so media-shy that the British newspapers keep rerunning photographs of him from the seventies, when he had long, curly sideburns and vaguely resembled the rock singer Dion circa "Runaround Sue." Two months after Maurice's ouster, Charles resigned as Life President of Saatchi & Saatchi, a largely ceremonial post he had held since the end of 1993, and threw in his lot with his younger brother. But Charles, who is now fifty-one, has for several years spent less time on advertising than on his two great passions—his art collection, which is perhaps the largest private holding of contemporary painting and sculpture in the world, and, of all things, go-cart racing. Maurice used to collect antique toys, but they disappeared with his first marriage, and now what he amasses is mainly garden bric-a-brac. "I just like a bit of old junk, a bit of a column, a bit of a ruin, a pergola, things like that," he says.

The garden is in the grounds of Old Hall, his manse in Sussex, where he and his second wife, the novelist Josephine Hart, give lunches attended by what in England are referred to as "the great and the good": Tory ministers such as Kenneth Baker and Michael Howard, the former American Ambassador Raymond Seitz, the playwright David Hare, the actress Diana Rigg, the publisher Matthew Evans, the literary agent Ed Victor, the writers Iris Murdoch and John Bayley. Maurice floats through these affairs radiating politesse, cynicism, and a kind of devil-may-care bravado, all at once. "But even when he is hosting one of his own parties, he is a rather quiet figure," Lord Gowrie, the chairman of the Arts Council of England, says. "He's always a little bit at the edges of the party, slightly in the suburbs of his own city, and his movements are rather subtle." In fact, he has spent a good deal of his life hovering behind others, being No. 2—first behind Charles, who was always viewed as the guiding wizard of Saatchi & Saatchi, and now behind his forceful and charismatic wife, whose novels, "Damage" and "Sin," have made her a British literary celebrity. Yet diffidence is essential to his charm. He is witty in a way that manages to be both caustic and self-effacing; friends describe him as "a listener" and "a great natural psychologist." And these are traits that have proved productive in the world of advertising, where hearing out clients and responding to their demands are at least as important as a flair for the zippy slogan.

"The reason that most people find advertising men rather paranoid and insecure types," Maurice explains, "is that they *are* insecure, because usually their clients are on ninety days' notice. So if a client whispers that he doesn't want something done, you don't do it." This, in part, is why Maurice was and remains astonished at his ouster: several of his clients had openly threatened to leave the company if he should be removed—and, when he was, did. For him it was the sort of event that has become increasingly common in an age of shareholder activism: shareholders who knew nothing about the workings of the business they owned had toppled the very man who knew best how to run it. As he saw it, this was a hostile takeover—a war between the moneymen and the talent, between corporate-governance zealots and real admen. "It was an Alice in Wonderland world," Saatchi says. "Everything I considered normal and usual in the advertising business was turned upside down."

But, of course, that is how the Saatchi brothers themselves got where they were: by turning everything normal and usual in the advertising business upside down. Their provenance had always set them apart: they were the second and third of four sons of Nathan and Daisy Saatchi, an Iraqi Jewish couple who moved, with their family, from Baghdad to London in 1947, in the vanguard of what proved to be a monumental exodus of Iraqi Jews after the Second World War. In London, Nathan Saatchi bought and operated textile mills; the family lived in tony Hampstead and Highgate; and the four boys assimilated quickly. But Charles was rebellious, im-

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GERALD SCARFE

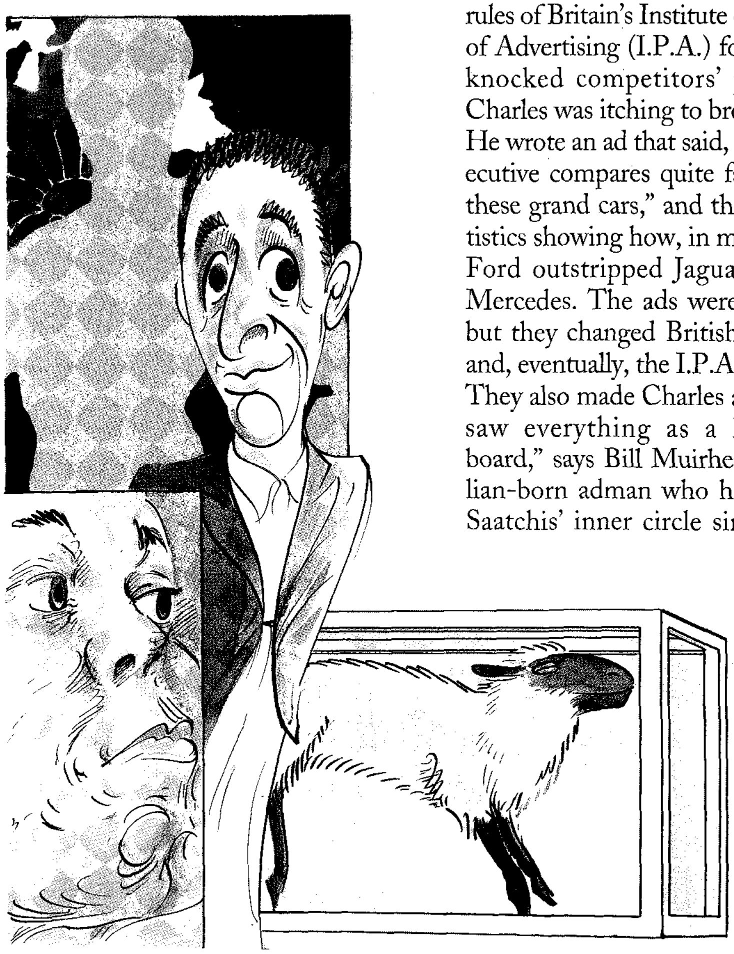
patient with school; he dropped out at the age of seventeen and spent the next few years tomcatting around London.

The sixties were dawning: Olde London became Swinging London, a miniskirted, David Bailey world, with dope and the Yardbirds in the air. It was a good time to be a self-styled iconoclast, and while Maurice was proving an academic success—he graduated with top honors from the London School of Economics—Charles drifted into what looked like an easy job: advertising. During the early sixties, he cut a swath through several lesser agencies before winding up at what was then perhaps the most creative shop in London—Collett Dickenson Pearce. His colleagues there included the future film director Alan Parker and the future film producer David Puttnam.

Very quickly, Charles became a leading copywriter, notable for his rock-star hair, his Carnaby Street clothes, and his obsession with cars. “He seemed to have a new car every second week, each one more glamorous and more unusual and noisier than the one before,” Sir David Puttnam says. “He had a way of generating excitement. He had this strange walk, very fast, with his head down and his shoulders forward. Still has it.” Charles teamed up with the art director Ross Cramer, and, working with Puttnam, they began turning out attention-getting ads for Selfridge’s, the London department store. “He always had this fantastic lateral mind,” Puttnam says. “His ideas would come in from left field. For Selfridge’s, we used to wander around the store on a Monday morning, we’d have lunch at the store, and then we’d decide which department we’d go see. And we’d spend the afternoon. Then we had to have the ad done by Tuesday morning. Charlie saw retail as show business. He really got off on that campaign.” The more celebrated of the Selfridge’s ads now sound rather quaint, but in those days they were regarded as winkingly hip: “The most valuable things shoplifters get off with in Selfridge’s are the girls on the cosmetics counter.” According to Puttnam, “That one came out of Charlie one afternoon chatting up the girls.”

In 1967, Charles Saatchi and Ross Cramer were put to work on the Ford account. Charles had spent a year in America, and had loved the advertising he’d seen there—it was so much less stuffy than British advertising, so much more direct. The point of advertising, after all, was to make people buy your products instead of your competitors’. In that sense, English ads never said what they meant; British propriety had shackled British advertising the way it had shackled the rest of British society. “Charlie Saatchi was one of the inventors of modern British advertising, because he brought comparative advertising to Britain,” says Robin Wight, the chairman of London’s WCRS agency. “British advertising had always had a whimsical streak, because the traditional person in British advertising was a failed poet or novelist. But British people don’t like selling. Americans like selling. And Charlie Saatchi took the straightness and candor of the American approach and Britishized it—added wit, added an art-directed style, added irony. You know, an American with irony is an Englishman.”

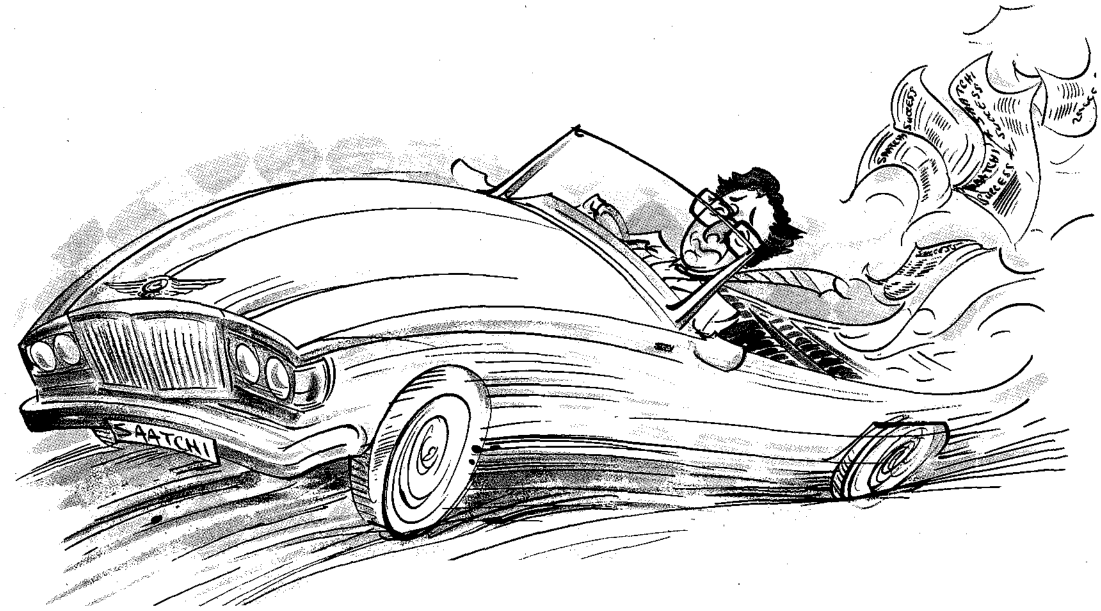
American advertising had been revolutionized, if that is not too grand a word for it, by Bill Bernbach’s early-sixties Volkswagen ads, which cajoled customers into loving the humble Beetle for what it was: an ugly, underpowered, but eminently practical and reliable car. The Volkswagen advertising gave buyers the novel impression that they were being told the truth, and the mixture of wryness and hard sell felt like a breakthrough. The other great force in American advertising was the Scotsman David Ogilvy, whose own branch of adman pseudoscience emphasized the importance of brands. Ogilvy’s ads for Hathaway shirts featured a man with an eye patch, who was the perfect expression of the Ogilvy formula: Product plus personality equals brand. Once the brand was established, it was the advertiser’s job to give it what Robin Wight calls “a first-class ticket in life.”



CANVASSED OPINION *Charles Saatchi’s fierce appetite for new art came to mirror Maurice’s fierce appetite for new subsidiaries.*

One of Charles’s early Ford ads showed a new Cortina zipping past an older car, and the copy read, “They appear the same—but disappear differently.” The rules of Britain’s Institute of Practitioners of Advertising (I.P.A.) forbade ads that knocked competitors’ products, but Charles was itching to break those rules. He wrote an ad that said, “The Ford Executive compares quite favourably with these grand cars,” and then printed statistics showing how, in many categories, Ford outstripped Jaguar, Rover, and Mercedes. The ads were controversial, but they changed British advertising—and, eventually, the I.P.A. policy as well. They also made Charles a star. “Charles saw everything as a kind of billboard,” says Bill Muirhead, an Australian-born adman who has been in the Saatchis’ inner circle since 1972, and soon became one of their top executives. “The shortest number of words, the most powerful, simple expression of the message. He would be sitting there at his desk, and his mind would be going, and then, in his little handwriting, he would write it. And in one case he wrote the copy on a picture of an orange"—this in a campaign for Jaffa oranges—"and he said, 'That's it, there's the ad, go and do it.' And we set the copy on an actual orange and photographed it. Simple as that. I kept some of the drawings, because I thought someday it might be like Leonardo, or something."

By 1968, Charles and Ross Cramer had formed their own consultancy—that is, a firm that is hired by larger agencies to create ads for their clients—in a building on Goodge Street in which David Puttnam was beginning to make films. In 1970, Cramer became restless and left the consultancy, and Charles decided to turn it into a full-fledged agency, with a new partner—his brother Maurice.



RIDING HIGH *The Saatchis began as counterculture mavericks, playing establishment games, but they quickly became establishment squires.*

From the very beginning, the Saatchi brothers made it clear that theirs was going to be an unusual—an un-British—approach to advertising: not only would the world see their ads; it would know which agency devised them. In America, Charles had seen a celebrity culture coming alive, and he sensed what many of his competitors did not—that such tawdry Yank values as "personality" and "sex appeal" could translate into revenue. Charles and Maurice understood mystique. They recognized that those two alien, intertwined words—Saatchi & Saatchi, with the ampersand in the middle like a magic amulet—possessed a kind of voodoo. Among their backers were the designer Mary Quant and Lindsay Masters, who, with the future Conservative Party stalwart Michael Heseltine, was then a publisher at Haymarket Press. Haymarket owned the magazine *Campaign*, the most influential advertising trade journal in London. And, conveniently, Maurice had served as business-development manager there. (His colleague in the classified-ad department was a young sales manager named Josephine Hart.) When Maurice became the owlish public face of Saatchi & Saatchi, a steady gush of headlines in *Campaign* insured that Charles's reputation as the elusive and mercurial genius behind the scenes grew apace.

And he *was* mercurial. "Charles has got a very violent temper," a longtime Saatchi director says. "In the old days, he would beat Maurice up, physically, in the office. One day, he said to Maurice, 'I can't believe you came out of the same womb that I did,' and then picked up an aluminum chair and ran down the table and hit Maurice on the head with it. What it would usually be about was that Charles had spent a lot of time trying to get the ad right, but there Maurice would be, rehearsing the presentation and looking slightly bored. So Charles would be—boom!" Charles himself had been a compelling presenter, but early in his career he largely gave it up. "I think he stopped because a couple of times he got to the point where he nearly came to blows with the client," Bill Muirhead says.

By 1975, the Saatchis had made a few small attempts to expand, and had often come out the poorer for it. But in the fall of that year they merged with Britain's eleventh-largest agency—Garland-Compton, a publicly held company that was part of a sizable international advertising firm headquartered in New York, and that had had some billings from the world's biggest client, Procter & Gamble. Although Garland-Compton dwarfed Saatchi, the brothers managed to prevail upon their co-owners to name the firm Saatchi & Saatchi Garland-Compton—a mouthful that the ad world invariably shortened to Saatchi & Saatchi. The Saatchis moved their offices into the Compton building, on Charlotte Street, but the headline in *Campaign* ran, "Saatchi swallows up the Compton Group"—a misstatement that proved self-fulfilling. The Saatchis soon took over the rest of Compton. They were a public company now, and Maurice began to use their new stock-market listing as a source of risk capital. Both brothers had always been intent on being the best, the most profitable, and the most famous, but, according to Ivan Fallon, in his superb 1988 book about the Saatchis, "The Brothers," Charles would probably have been satisfied with running the top ad agency in London. It was Maurice who, inspired by the resources available to a public company, began to envision an advertising business bigger and more encompassing than any that had ever been. In the end, going public would prove to be a Faustian compact.

FOR a time, Saatchi & Saatchi knew nothing but success. "I've never seen an agency function so effectively," says Martin Sorrell, the former Saatchi group finance director, who is now the head of WPP, the largest advertising company in the world. "This brilliant flair for publicity, brilliant control—some would call it manipulation—of publicity. Every week, there would be another headline—'Saatchi wins another million-pound campaign.' And Maurice was one of the first to think strategically about the business instead of just tactically. There was an I.P.A. convention that you didn't go and pitch the clients of other members of the I.P.A., but since the Saatchis weren't members of the I.P.A. they pitched those clients, and often got them. It was really what Maurice used to call the art of the impossible. We were in the coup business."

At first, the winning of the Conservative Party account might not seem much of a coup. British admen had rarely taken political advertising seriously: it was pro-bono work, tame and ineffective. But in 1978 the Tories hired Saatchi & Saatchi to run the election that would first propel Margaret Thatcher into 10 Downing Street, and the brothers once again took an uncustomary approach. They decided to extend the principle of comparative advertising to the political ad: they weren't going to say that the Tories were good; they were going to say that Labour was bad. And they did so in one of the most devastating political posters in British history: it depicted a serpentine line of unemployed workers stretching back into the distance underneath the legend "Labour Isn't Working." Britain wasn't accustomed to that sort of negative political advertising; it was one of those things that simply weren't done. But the Conservatives trounced the Labour Party in 1979, and the Saatchis became famous all over Britain as "Thatcher's admen."

Like Charles, Maurice too was studying the Americans, and what he took away from his lessons was an obsession with size. "Nothing is impossible" was the Saatchis' frequently repeated motto; it had always sounded strange issuing from British lips, yet it was part of every American's upbringing. The Americans were individualists struggling to be No. 1—to win the big prize, the World Series, Miss America, the Academy Award. Better still, as Maurice saw it, anybody could clamber up the ladder in America; there was no class system to keep you down. Maurice claims that he has never experienced a moment of anti-Semitism in Britain—he claims it doesn't exist—but there is a reason that he and Charles enjoy calling themselves members of the North London Jewish Mafia. They view themselves as renegade establishmentarians—loners who, like the legendary American loners, made it to the top by virtue not of bloodlines but of merit.

In 1983, Maurice Saatchi read an article on "globalization" in the *Harvard Business Review* and became very excited. Its author, Theodore Levitt, was a Harvard professor of business administration who would later become an outspoken Saatchi board member. Levitt's article argued that the age of the multinational company was over. Multinationals had spent years adjusting and customizing their products in hundreds of different ways for hundreds of international markets, but the business world had changed. The trick now was to "globalize"—to make a universally appealing product, like Coca-Cola or Madonna, that was everywhere the same, and, more to the point, to sell it everywhere in much the same way. "Globalization" became Maurice's watchword, and he applied it to British Airways, the dowdy and inefficient government-run airline (a well-known joke had the initials B.A. standing for "Bloody Awful"), which was about to be privatized. The Saatchi team wanted to sell B.A. without resorting to dewy stewardesses filling coffee cups and passengers smiling blissfully in their sleep. In researching the company, Bill Muirhead uncovered an interesting statistic: because British Airways had inherited so many routes across the former British empire, it actually flew more people to more places internationally than any other airline on earth. Which led the brothers to a global idea, an idea that they could sell everywhere, in every market—that British Airways was, literally, "The world's favourite airline."

But to Maurice globalization meant more than global selling; it meant expansion. He wanted Saatchi to be not just the biggest advertising agency in Britain but the biggest in the world. And why stop at advertising? Chief executives had been coming to him for years seeking advice about management, design, media buying, employee compensation. After all, Maurice was no mere adman. He, like them, was the boss of a big, publicly held company; he understood their problems. So why wouldn't clients want to employ the Saatchi organization for all kinds of help? Why should it not acquire design consultancies and public-relations consultancies and management consultancies?

So began one of the most extraordinary acquisition rampages Britain had ever seen. Maurice envisaged a business supermarket where clients could enjoy "one-stop shopping," where there would be "synergy" and "cross-selling" between companies in related fields. Saatchi & Saatchi could take clients who had come to it for one service—advertising, for instance—and try to sell them on another of its companies, which provided another service—say, package design. By 1986, Saatchi had acquired thirty-seven other companies, thirteen of them in just the previous year, and all those acquisitions made the company's earnings on paper look higher and higher; in the decade between 1977 and 1987, it was the third-highest-performing company in all England. The Saatchis were treated as national heroes, the Promethean wonders of Thatcher's brave new Britain. Charles had married an icily glamorous American blonde, Doris Lockhart (they have since divorced), who had tutored him in the nuances of contemporary-art collecting, only to watch his interest turn to obsession. By the mid-eighties, he and Doris had built their own thirty-thousand-square-foot gallery, and Charles's fierce appetite for new art had come to mirror Maurice's fierce appetite for new subsidiaries.

And, as Charles grew more reclusive, Maurice was emerging as an exceptionally dashing figure in his own right. "My daughter said he was the most attractive man in London," David Puttnam says. "He became a very glossy and glamorous man." In the midst of the elegant parties he staged, in which he would beguile toothpaste manufacturers by seating them next to Cabinet ministers and money barons, Maurice would poke fun at his own failures; he collected cartoons that lampooned him by name. And his strangely insinuating decorum became a business style. When he began his expansion push, he would send out dozens of letters a week to other agencies, many of them much larger and more established than Saatchi & Saatchi; the letters invariably began, "I am sure this will be the last thing on your minds, but I wondered if you felt it would make sense to dispose of your company." In the early days, those missives were jeered at, but by the late seventies Maurice's blend of self-deprecation and bad-boy insouciance was appreciated as a kind of panache. And it was combined with a ferocity that was, once again, distinctly un-British. "The Saatchis were like the Japanese coming over the trenches on those death beaches in the Pacific," Robin Wight says. "They took no prisoners. And they pulled every bloody string."

Maurice had developed a business philosophy based in part on a theory of market share called the law of dominance, which posited that unless your company is among the top three in its market you are doomed to failure. The Saatchi version went, "One is wonderful. Two can be terrific. Three is threatened. Four is fatal." Maurice wanted to be No. 1 in the entire world. And in order to reach that pinnacle he needed to acquire another United States-based international network. Preferably a very, very big one.

Ted Bates was a very, very big one—the world's third-biggest agency. By 1986, its great days were behind it, but it maintained a distinct corporate culture. Its eponymous founder had developed his own deep advertising aperçu, which was later articulated by his successor, Rosser Reeves, and then became ad-world gospel—the Unique Selling Proposition, or U.S.P.: Every advertisement should demonstrate that the client's product will confer a single clear benefit obtainable nowhere else. Hence Bates's most famous campaigns: "It's not just a job, it's an adventure," for the United States Navy; "Get a piece of the Rock," for Prudential; and the peculiar but horribly memorable "The milk chocolate melts in your mouth, not in your hand," for M&M's.

The Saatchis wanted Bates, and they were prepared to pay three hundred million dollars for it. Bates asked for four hundred and fifty million—more than twice the price, according to Ivan Fallon in "The Brothers," of all the Saatchis' thirty-seven previous acquisitions put together. Massive though Saatchi & Saatchi was, it didn't have that kind of money, so the Saatchis rigged up one of their favorite financial gimmicks: they launched a rights issue.

A rights issue, which is a method rarely used in America, is a way of raising cash by issuing more stock. Issuing more stock, of course, dilutes the worth of the shares that people already hold—it means that you own a smaller percentage of the company than you thought you did—but a rights issue is intended to redress that problem: it gives shareholders the "right" to buy enough new shares (generally at a discount) so that they still own the same percentage of the company as before the dilution. The money from share sales can then be used to acquire a big new business. In theory, that acquisition should send earnings higher. In theory, everyone should be happy.

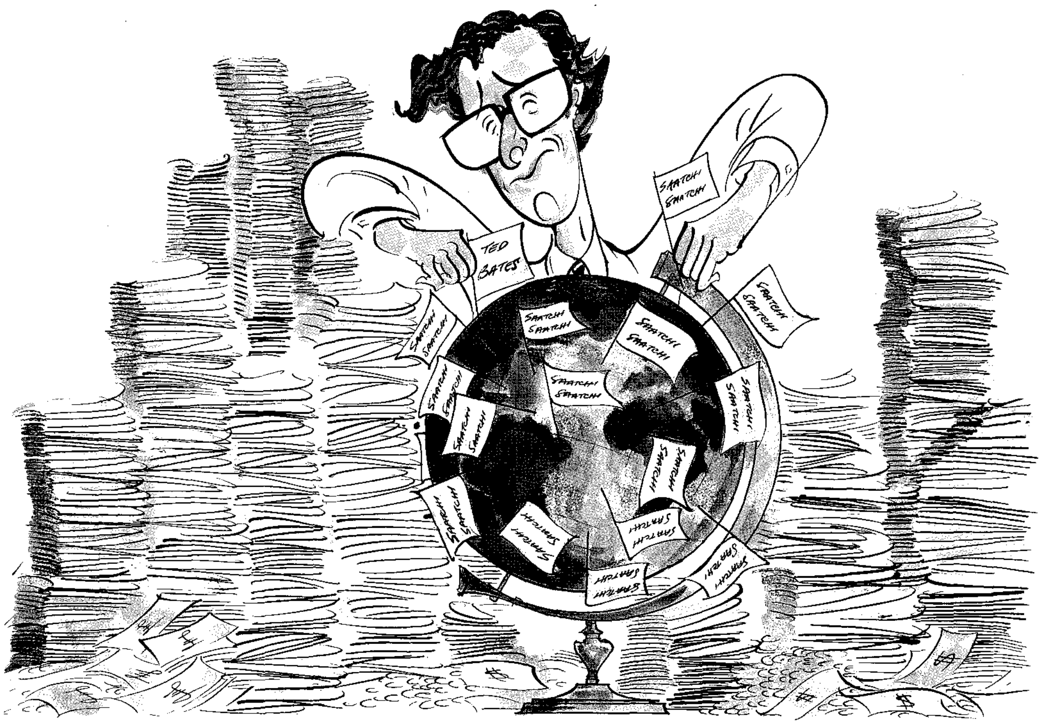
For a time, everyone was. The Saatchis combined Ted Bates with another expensive and recent American acquisition, the Backer & Spielvogel agency (which had cost them a hundred million dollars), and called it Backer Spielvogel Bates Worldwide. With that ungainly contraption stuffed under its belt, Saatchi & Saatchi P.L.C. was an enormous holding company, comprising seventeen recently acquired advertising agencies, several management consultancies and media-buying companies, and what eventually became two of the planet's largest international advertising networks: Saatchi & Saatchi Advertising Worldwide and Bates Worldwide. It was, at long last, the biggest advertising company in the world. And, though sizable sectors of its business were foundering—the management consultancies in particular—the brothers' hubris was not. It was time, they decided, to buy a bank.

Midland Bank, itself once the biggest bank in the world, looked vulnerable. Despite its financial woes, it was also very prestigious—one of Britain's four clearing houses, through which all the other banks in the country cleared checks. It would probably cost about three billion pounds. Maurice approached Midland and made his pitch. He was turned down flat. The City found the very idea of Midland's becoming part of an ad business appalling. The financial press was derisive, and Saatchi & Saatchi stock tumbled. "It became a cause célèbre," Maurice says. "People thought, These upstarts reached too far—they're too big for their boots. 'Jumped-Up Adman Seeks to Buy Noble Banking Institution'—it writes itself, doesn't it?"

The Saatchis didn't know it, but the Midland Bank fiasco was the beginning of the end. "I think we must have thought that we were people who could walk on water," Maurice says. "The evidence appeared to be that we could. But our timing was exquisitely bad, because in 1990 the advertising market fell, in nominal terms, for the first time since the war. People had very nice computer models of advertising growth continuing. But it didn't."

MAURICE'S detractors don't agree that bad timing was the only problem. The way they see it, a bigger problem was Maurice: he was, quite simply, a terrible manager. The Bates acquisition had been far too expensive, and so had most of the other acquisitions. The rights issues and other jury-rigged financial initiatives had been dreadful mistakes: they had given the Saatchis no option but to expand prodigally, to earn more every year. Worse, many of the acquisitions had been purchased using earn-outs. This was a pernicious method whereby the Saatchis paid the firm they were buying a certain sum up front—perhaps half that firm's stated value—and agreed to complete the deal by paying a multiple of whatever the firm's profits were for the next few years. Human nature being what it is, this procedure gave the owners of the newly acquired firm an overwhelming incentive to work very hard during those first few years, curtail investments, and churn out a lot of profits, so that the Saatchis would have to cough up more and more to complete the purchase. Then, with the earn-out period behind them and all that Saatchi money jingling in their pockets, the firm's former owners might take a nice long Caribbean vacation, leaving the new owners to wonder why a once energetic outfit was now so stubbornly failing to perform.

Perhaps they didn't wonder enough. In the opinion of many observers (most of whom do not wish their names divulged amid the current legal crossfire), the Saatchis never seemed aware that they had engendered a flailing octopus, fat and chaotic and dangerous to everyone around it. The Saatchis knew how to buy companies; what they didn't know was how to integrate them. One eminent consultant who discussed their "one-stop shopping" theory with Maurice remembers trying to explain to him that it wouldn't work. Why, for instance, would a client who had selected a company for its brilliant advertising have any reason to believe that a different company under the same umbrella would be brilliant at handling payroll? Just because his friendly adman said so? And, if you were going to depend on cross-selling, you had better be sure that the adman and the payroll man who both toiled under your umbrella were on friendly terms. Inside the Saatchi organization, as it happened, they were likely to be at each other's throats. "I tried to explain all that," the consultant recalls, "and Maurice just said, 'Well, there's a million things people have told us we can't do. But we can do the impossible.' And he really believed this."



ON TOP OF THE WORLD *Maurice decided that globalization was the future. So began one of the most extraordinary acquisition rampages Britain had ever seen.*

THE eighties came to a noisy and premature halt with the stock-market crash of October, 1987. Like the cartoon coyote that runs off a cliff but doesn't realize it's in midair until it looks down, the Saatchis continued to scurry onward for a year or so. In 1988, theirs was still the biggest advertising conglomerate in the world, with revenues of nearly two billion dollars—seven hundred million more than their nearest competitor, the New York-based Interpublic group, which owned the McCann-Erickson and Lintas networks. But within three years of the crash Saatchi's stock, which had once been one of the highest-flying stocks in the world, lost ninety-eight per cent of its value, and Saatchi's market share withered. After 1988, Saatchi & Saatchi P.L.C. was no longer No. 1; it had been surpassed by WPP, which, under the former Saatchi group finance director Martin Sorrell, had bought J. Walter Thompson and Ogilvy & Mather. And during the next few years, after the recession in America ended, the two giant United States-based holding companies, Interpublic and Omnicom (which owns B.B.D.O. and D.D.B. Needham), also surged past the Saatchis, who wound up in fourth place.

By early 1990, Saatchi & Saatchi was on the verge of bankruptcy. The brothers concluded that the only way to reassure the City and Wall Street was to bring in some professional managers, and they turned to a Pennsylvania-based company called I.M.S., which specialized in supplying research data to pharmaceutical firms, and which the Saatchis had once considered taking over. The company's chief executive, Robert Louis-Dreyfus, became the new Saatchi chief executive, and he brought with him his investment partner Thomas Russell, who became a board member, and his finance director, Charles Scott, who became Saatchi's finance director.

Louis-Dreyfus was the sort of character the Saatchis admired. In his distaste for stuffed-shirt convention, he was a lot like them, and in his blue-blooded origins he was a lot like what they wished to be: he was the scion of one of the wealthiest families in France. He moved quickly to solve the company's biggest problem: in 1988, near the end of its expansion spree, it had been encouraged by one of its bankers to raise money by means of a tricky new instrument called a convertible preference share, or a Euroconvertible. This was a sort of stock offering, but with a sting in its tail—if the company's share price failed to go above four hundred and forty-one pence by July 15, 1993, the purchaser of the Euroconvertible had the right to "put" the stock back to the company; that is, the company would be forced to buy back the stock at its original selling price and add a nearly twenty-per-cent bonus. The 1987 crash alone halved the price of Saatchi & Saatchi shares, and the stock had subsequently tumbled further, but not before the company had sold a hundred and seventy-seven million pounds' worth of Euroconvertibles—which meant that, with the bonus included, Saatchi & Saatchi potentially owed Euroconvertible holders more than two hundred million pounds (or more than three hundred million dollars) at the very moment when it could least afford to pay them. It was Louis-Dreyfus's task to convince banks and shareholders that instead of putting the stock (and probably not being paid anyway, because all those puts would drive the company into bankruptcy) they should allow the Euroconvertibles to be turned into ordinary equity—ordinary Saatchi & Saatchi stocks. He assured them that the company had changed its ways, that it was still a sound business brimming with talent, and that the people who had demolished it, Maurice and Charles Saatchi, were taking a back seat while the financial pros mopped up their mess.

Maurice went along with the program. "It was a very painful period," he says. "I wore sackcloth and ashes every day." He tended his garden, tooled about London and Cap-Ferrat in his two raspberry-colored Bentleys, and watched over his wife's burgeoning career. Josephine Hart had been a force on the London cultural scene for some time: she had been organizing poetry readings and had recently become a successful theatre producer. But when she became a novelist she underwent a striking transformation. Her copious gray hair, which she had kept tucked up in a severe yet ornate bun, gave way to a sleek black pageboy; her wardrobe went sleek and black, too, and the British press began employing the word "formidable" in front of her name. "Maurice would walk into rooms a couple of paces behind Josephine, and he was always very witty about it," Ed Victor, the London literary agent, says. "He referred to it as his Denis Thatcher mode. And he took tremendous delight in her success. There was not one shred of jealousy—they are a very loving couple. But one night my wife asked him how life was treating him and he said, 'Fabulous, just fabulous.' And she said, 'That bad, huh?' And he said, 'Yes. That bad.' "

Yet Saatchi & Saatchi P.L.C. was gradually returning to a kind of financial soundness. Louis-Dreyfus cut the company's staff by fifteen per cent, reorganized its sprawl of subsidiary businesses, slashed salaries, sold off unproductive acquisitions, and reduced the debt. But there was a price to pay. Louis-Dreyfus's solution to the Euroconvertible problem had had an odd effect: because he had turned a great many Euroconvertibles into ordinary shares, the former Euroconvertible holders now owned nearly ninety per cent of the company. And most of those shareholders were American—a development that was soon to stir up trouble.

In April, 1993, Louis-Dreyfus left to run the ailing German sportswear firm Adidas. He was replaced by his lieutenant Charles Scott, the finance director, a big, shambling, friendly man who was then forty-five and looked a good deal older. Scott drove a Toyota and had grown up wanting to be a soccer star; he made no bones about being a plain-vanilla accountant rather than an adman, and didn't mind being called a "bean counter" by his slick "creatives." The financial community liked and trusted him, and Scott soon came up with a carefully wrought strategy for the company's future. But Maurice was growing restless. True, the company had been saved from bankruptcy, and it was now being prudently run, but it wasn't going anywhere, and in late 1993, when the company lost a couple of American accounts, revenues fell by about five per cent.

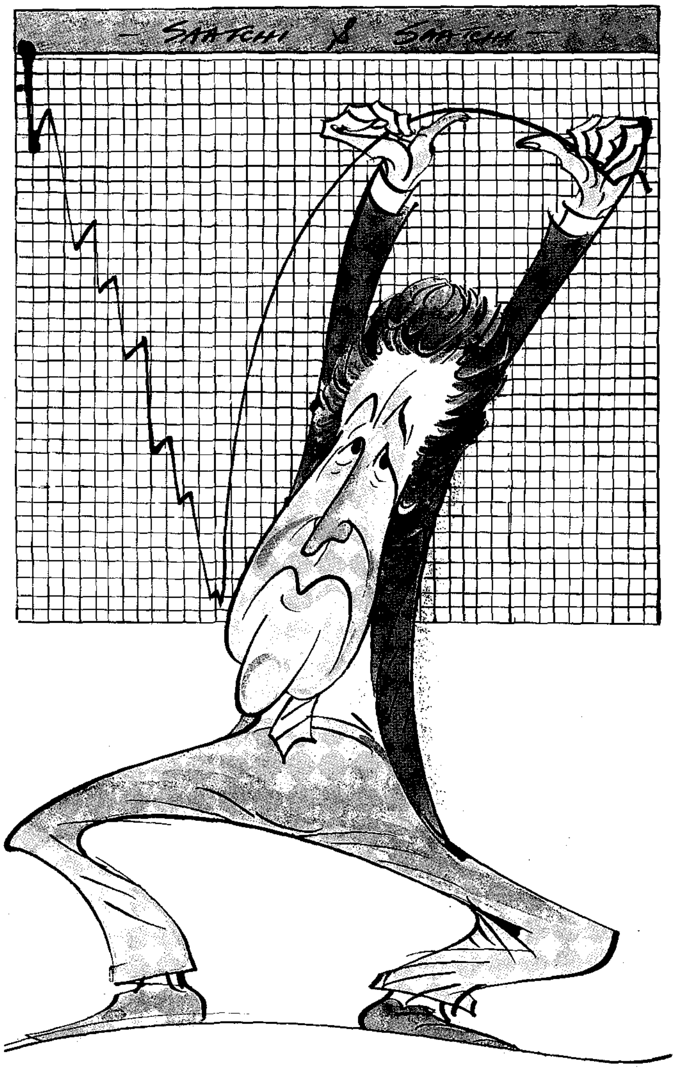
Maurice felt he had been bamboozled. He had brought in Louis-Dreyfus, who was dashing, rich, and unconventional, who had flouted tradition by showing up for meetings in jeans and flannel shirts, who liked to go mountain climbing, and whom gossip columns had linked with Kim Basinger. But Louis-Dreyfus had vanished and left him with Scott, and not only was Scott a gray, lumbering suit in Maurice's view but he wasn't even moving the company forward. Meanwhile, Charles Saatchi had virtually given up on the business, and had stepped down to the figurehead post of Life President—a job that paid him half a million dollars a year to do almost nothing. Now Maurice brought on a distinguished new board member, Sir Peter Walters, formerly of British Petroleum and the Midland Bank, and sought his advice. As charmed by Maurice as everyone else was, Sir Peter suggested that the chairman might become a bit more assertive.

Maurice became a lot more assertive. In February, 1994, Charles Scott, who had become fed up with the dozy performance of the American branch of Saatchi & Saatchi Advertising, fired its chief executive, Bob Kennedy. But Kennedy's contract had a typically fat Saatchi severance package built into it: firing him cost the company six million dollars, and Kennedy had held the job for only a year. Here was an opportunity. According to close associates, Maurice undertook a behind-the-scenes press manipulation, and now the newspapers began running stories that used Kennedy's expensive dismissal as a jumping-off point for expatiating on Scott's ineptitude. Scott was an unimaginative pencil-pusher, the articles said, and the reason the company was not being buoyed up along with the rest of the swelling advertising market was that it needed to be run by admen instead of accountants. "The time is approaching for Maurice Saatchi, who has played a detached role as chairman, to become more actively involved in directing strategy," the London *Evening Standard* said. Other newspapers printed their amens.

Scott soon began delivering counterpunches: the papers carried stories about Maurice's unusually rich pay package—so unusually rich that firing him would cost more than three million pounds, or about five million dollars. At the end of March, 1994, as the brickbats flew between Maurice and Scott, the board of Saatchi & Saatchi convened to hammer out an agreement and stop the feud. But by then the fuss had awakened some powerful new players. Master of P.R. though he was, Maurice had never anticipated how his press war against Scott might boomerang against him—by capturing the attention of David Herro.

UNDER other circumstances, the Saatchi brothers might have relished Herro. Like them, he was a renegade and a bit of an outsider; he had come down to Chicago from little Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, a farming and industrial community not far from Milwaukee. If it was the cowboy boldness of American advertising that had inspired the Saatchi ethos, here was the real thing: an audacious country boy who thought big and told it straight and wasn't afraid to be aggressive. In short, the shareholder from hell.

Even as a teen-ager, Herro was a battler. The London *Mail on Sunday* reported that his childhood nickname was Fess, after Fess Parker, who played Davy Crockett on television; a friend of his told the paper, "David is a man of very strong convictions. It is his way or no way. He's very intense." Herro is tall and athletic-looking, with dark curly hair and a salty drawl that puts one in mind of Gene Hackman. He is single, he lifts weights, and he lives in a substantial (but hardly luxurious) apartment just south of



LIFE'S A PITCH *Robert Louis-Dreyfus was brought in to sell stockholders a new angle.*

Chicago's Gold Coast district. "I always loved investing," he says, and, after graduating with a master's in economics from the University of Wisconsin, he began to do it for a living. He was good at it. At the age of twenty-six, he launched an international fund for the Principal Financial Group, in Des Moines, and three years later he joined the State of Wisconsin Investment Board and was put in charge of investing in international equity markets. Then, in 1992, he started up his own fund, Oakmark International, under the aegis of Harris Associates, in Chicago. During Oakmark's first year, its earnings were flat, but in 1993 they were up fifty-five per cent, against an index of thirty-four per cent: he had made Oakmark one of the best-performing diversified international funds in the country. And it was as the manager of that fund that, at the age of thirty-three, he took it upon himself to change things at Saatchi & Saatchi.

The company had interested him from the first. It looked undervalued, but he had never bought any stock in it, because he was so dismayed by the Saatchis' apparent dearth of business sense. To Herro's way of thinking, if you acquired a company and the income from that company could not pay the debt you had incurred in buying it, then something was wrong with your acquisition strategy. But when the brothers stepped back, and Louis-Dreyfus and Scott took over, Herro began buying Saatchi shares. He admired Louis-Dreyfus, and when Louis-Dreyfus was gone he admired Charles Scott. By early 1994, his fund was the company's largest shareholder, with 9.98 per cent of the stock—and the State of Wisconsin fund, with which Herro still had strong connections, owned 8.11 per cent.

As far as Herro was concerned, there was just one outstanding problem with Saatchi & Saatchi: the Saatchi brothers themselves, who were not doing much of anything and were spending an awful lot of money not doing it. Their foes have recently distributed figures indicating that during the years before Louis-Dreyfus the care and feeding of the brothers cost as much as five and a half million pounds a year (at a time when the holding company's overheads were about twenty-four million pounds). And, though nearly two million of that covered salary and pension benefits, the rest went to gardeners, housekeepers, Bentleys.

"Maurice is a slightly childlike figure sometimes," one of his close associates says. "He's quite incredibly charming and beguiling, but he just doesn't see that some things are an issue. I would personally feel embarrassed to drive around in a Bentley—I just would. There's something slightly anti-social about it—especially if my employees didn't have a pay rise for three years and I'm having to face them every day and they've all had their company cars taken away. But the funny thing was that the employees *wanted* him to have a Bentley. The employees *want* him to be in a castle with a wife who writes fantastic books, because that says he's successful. When I talked about these things with Maurice—which I did a lot—he would smile at me and say, 'But that's me, that's how I am.' He was exactly like that when he was twenty-one. Nothing's changed. I don't know why anybody is surprised."

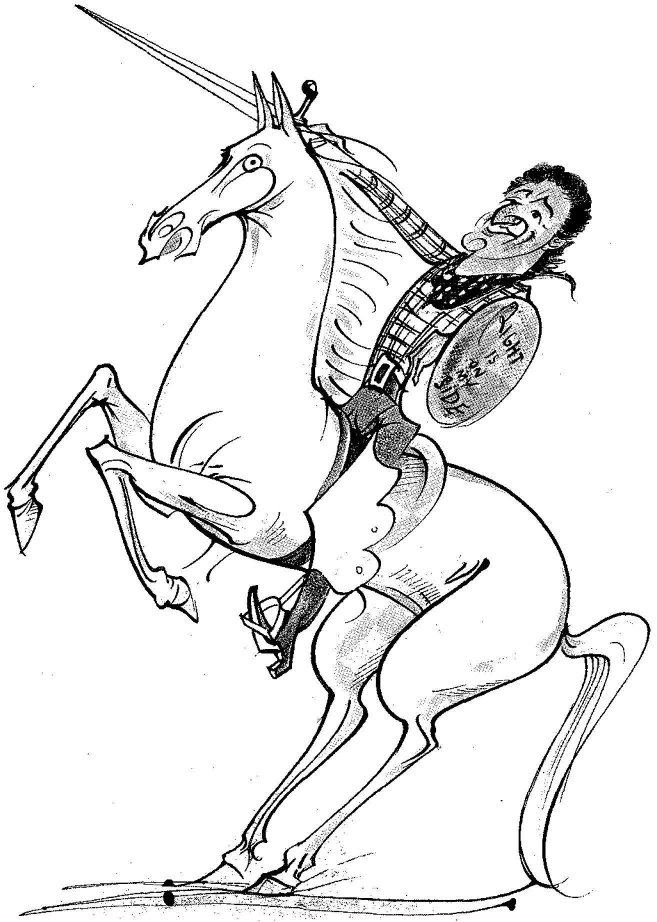
The lavish spending clearly offended Herro and his compatriots, but they probably would have put up with it if it hadn't been for the press war against Charles Scott. "I started thinking, Hmm—is this how a chairman of a company should react when someone is trying to help the company?" Herro says. "Should the chairman try to get his C.E.O. fired in an overt public-relations battle that is harming the reputation of a company that's supposed to be involved in imagery?" To Herro the press war was doubly outrageous—first, because it was so unseemly, and second (and perhaps more dire), because it heralded the return of Maurice Saatchi. Maurice may have been a hero to British admen, but Herro was no adman; he was a hardheaded economics graduate from Wisconsin. He had taken his investors' money, and he had assured them on his honor as a fund manager that Saatchi & Saatchi was in good hands. And now, as he saw it, Maurice was back from the grave, dripping and howling and rattling his chains.

On March 1, 1994, Herro sent a letter to the board of directors, most of whom, including Maurice Saatchi, had never heard of him. "Recently, there have been numerous accounts in the news media regarding 'board room squabbles' at Saatchi and Saatchi," he wrote. "The most distressing aspect of this, however, is the possibility that the source of this publicity has been from Saatchi board members. It seems possible, if the above is true, that the fiduciary responsibility the board members have to the shareholders of the company has been taken less than seriously." This last statement was a clear signal that Herro suspected Maurice of having instigated the press war. And Maurice responded quickly. On March 4th, he wrote back to Herro, declaring that every board member took his fiduciary responsibility seriously, and going on to say, "I quite agree with you that this debate should not take place in public. All the Board have been concerned about this adverse publicity and at our next Board Meeting . . . we will be reviewing our procedures in this area." Herro took this to be a denial that Maurice had engineered the press war. And Herro didn't believe him.

Herro went to London, and on March 25th he and Maurice Saatchi had a three-hour lunch together in the Berkeley Square offices, which the Saatchi brothers had not yet vacated (despite an announcement the previous December that they would do so). It was the first time the adversaries had met, and Maurice claims to remember very little about the conversation. Herro, however, remembers that Maurice was at his captivating best, that the food was exquisite and the liveried service punctilious, and that at the end of the meal there were fine cigars. In retrospect, of course, displaying such abundance was tantamount to waving a red flag in front of a bull. At one point, according to Herro, Maurice exclaimed that it was such a shame to have to give up the lovely offices in Berkeley Square. Herro was astonished, for a few minutes earlier Maurice had asked him whether he had any ideas about how the company might cut costs. But what most vexed him was the way Maurice responded when Herro suggested that, as chairman, Maurice might take a more active role "in terms of ownership in shares of the holding company." Maurice claims that he said he'd consider it, but, according to Herro, Maurice replied that buying more Saatchi stock would be too risky.

It was another red flag. On March 28th, Herro sent a letter to the board of directors demanding Maurice's removal, and on April 14th he fired off a letter to Maurice himself, thanking him for the lunch on March 25th and adding, "I do think we had a very interesting discussion." He went on to say, very politely, "I have become extremely concerned about your role as Chairman of the Company. This concern stems from my belief that your interests do not appear to be aligned with the interests of the shareholders of the Company."

Now it began dawning on the directors that if the company did not make peace with Herro before the Annual General Meeting, in June, he would lead a shareholder vote to oust Maurice—and, because he already had some thirty per cent of the shareholders voting with him, would probably win. Maurice began to stockpile ordnance for the battle ahead. By the end of May, he had a letter from Sir Colin Marshall, the chairman of British Airways, which was the Saatchi network's most visible client in the United Kingdom, and a letter from John and Forrest Mars, whose food company was Bates's biggest international client. The British Airways letter, addressed to Maurice's new ally on the board, Sir Peter Walters, told anyone who would listen that Maurice was "the driving force and key lynch-pin behind [our] relationship" and added, ominously, "In the event that Maurice should no longer be in a position to direct our advertising strategy we would have to consider our own position." The letter from Mars was even scarier. It was addressed to Maurice, and its tone was stern: "It seems appropriate to remind you, and the Management of Bates/Saatchi, that we insist that our agencies have their top people involved in our business. . . . We are pleased that you have been able to do this and believe that if you were not fulfilling that role our service would suffer significantly. In fact we might and probably would have to transfer our business to your competitors."


RIGHT IS ON MY SIDE

HEIGH-HO HERRO *If it was the cowboy boldness of American advertising that had inspired the Saatchi ethos, here was the real thing.*

Within days, it is said, the two letters had found their way to just about every financial journalist in London.

On May 18th, a peculiar foursome made a pilgrimage to Chicago to meet with David Herro. Charles Scott was one of them, and the Saatchi investor-relations director, Tim Jackson, was another. With them were Stuart Cameron, a Saatchi board member, and Jeremy Sinclair, the board's deputy chairman. Sinclair was a bald, exceedingly soft-spoken man who chain-smoked Cuban cigars; he had been a Saatchi employee since the agency's birth, in 1970, and had been regarded as second only to Charles Saatchi among the company's creative forces. It was he who, in the agency's first year, devised the ad, for Britain's Health Education Council, that remains the company's most famous: a morose-looking man wearing a Beatles haircut and a V-neck sweater and clutching an improbably bulging belly above the words "Would you be more careful if it was you that got pregnant?" Now forty-eight, Sinclair had become queasy about some of his fellow board members. He had the unpleasant sensation that, despite all they knew about the niceties of "fiduciary responsibility," none of them knew a thing about advertising. He also firmly believed that Maurice was vital to the company.

Stuart Cameron, a longtime Saatchi fan, had run Gallaher, a division of American Brands. The company made Silk Cut cigarettes, and Silk Cut had always been Charles Saatchi's favorite account. When the company first came to Saatchi, in 1984, it had a problem—a widespread perception that Silk Cut was not exactly a manly smoke. And Charles's mission was made all the more difficult by recent British regulations about cigarette advertising, which forbade any depiction of the usual wholesomely grinning smokers. "I remember Charles sitting in his office, doing this little drawing," Sinclair recalls. "He said, 'What do you think of that?' And it was a piece of silk with a cut in it. So he said, 'There it is, there's your ad.' The brand had been too effeminate, and this ad had a sort of violent streak in it. And it doubled their market share." The ads, which always had a bit of cut purple silk in them somewhere (and usually some rustic-looking scissors), grew in sophistication, and Charles Saatchi continued to supervise them, even after he stopped participating in most other campaigns. As far as Stuart Cameron was concerned, you couldn't have a Saatchi & Saatchi without any Saatchis.

In Chicago, Cameron, Sinclair, and Scott presented Herro with their argument against voting Maurice out. They listened to what Herro had to say, and they came away with a plan: Maurice would agree to a sharply reduced salary but with a hefty incentivized stock-option scheme, subject to shareholder approval—if the stock went high enough, Maurice could be paid as much as five million pounds. And, instead of either staying in the background while Charles Scott did all the work or fighting Scott in the press, Maurice would work alongside him, letting Scott handle business affairs, while he himself improved revenues by drumming up new clients and keeping old ones smiling.

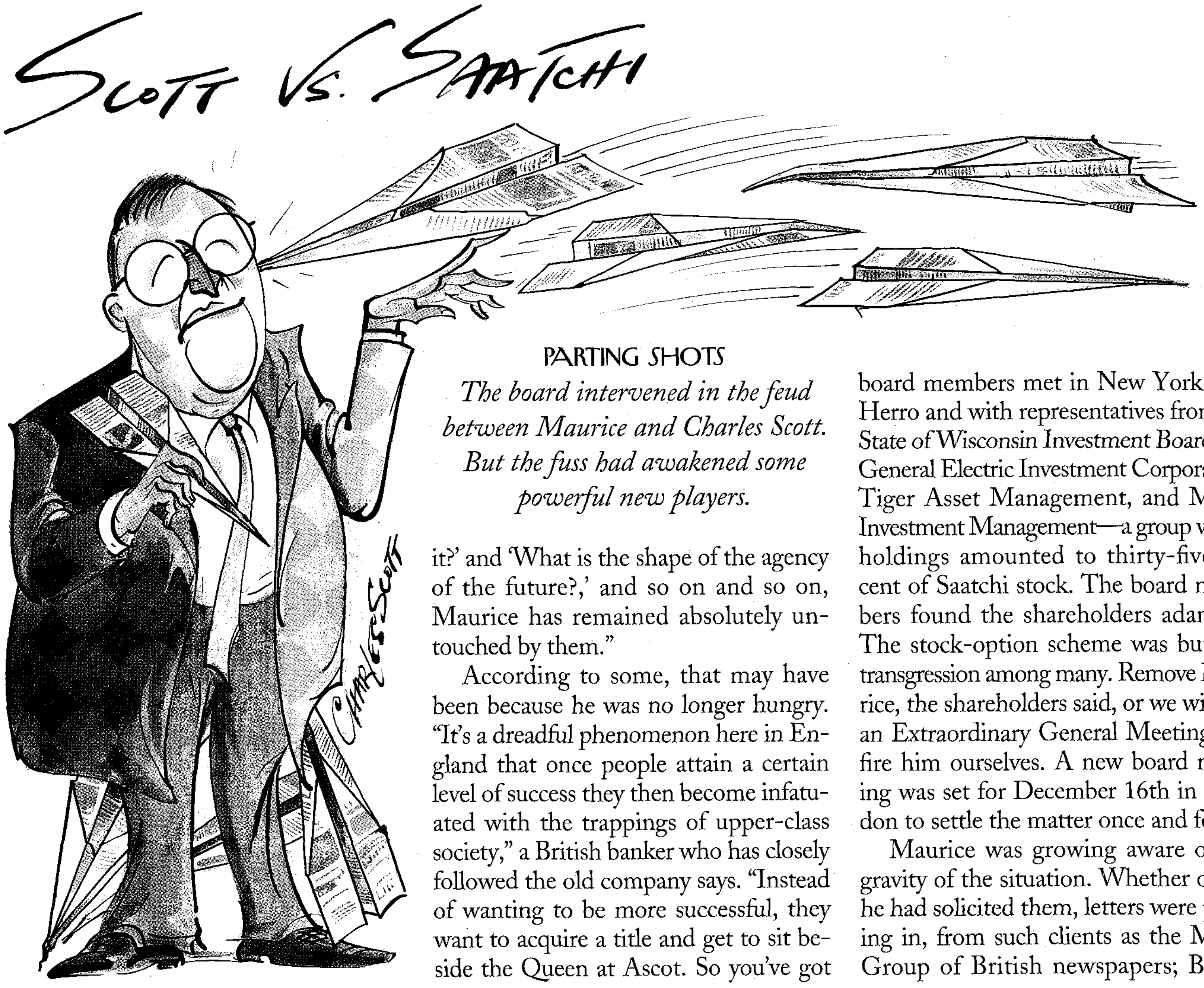
And there was one other thing: Herro and his allies were unhappy with the holding company's name. They had been hearing complaints from people at the two networks—Saatchi & Saatchi and Bates—and they had concluded that to continue calling the holding company Saatchi & Saatchi would be a mistake. Whenever there was a hullabaloo at Saatchi & Saatchi P.L.C.—the press war was a convenient example—the subsidiary Saatchi & Saatchi Advertising suffered. And, conversely, whenever Maurice succeeded in wooing a tycoon or smoothing a client's ruffled feathers his blandishments tended to benefit Saatchi & Saatchi Advertising and not any of the other subsidiaries. There had been an embarrassing incident in which Bates had won a Compaq-computer account and a confused journalist had credited the win to Saatchi & Saatchi. But the Saatchi & Saatchi Advertising network worked for Hewlett-Packard, Compaq's rival, and when the Hewlett people read the story they were enraged. The very purpose of having two separate networks was to avoid this sort of client conflict—you could easily lose major accounts that way. Wouldn't a name change solve the problem once and for all?

Back in London, Maurice heard Herro's demands and eventually gave in. He would accept the pay cut, would grow more active, would think about that name change. But in the back of his mind a tickle of worry remained. Was Herro really backing off, or would he come roaring back in a few months? After all, before this new agreement Maurice had been a very expensive man to get rid of. Now, with a three-year contract and a salary of two hundred thousand pounds, his removal could cost only six hundred thousand pounds. Firing him under the new contract might strike someone as a bargain.

THE summer of 1994 was a good one for Saatchi & Saatchi. Revenue numbers were rising; the stock climbed seventeen per cent. Saatchi Advertising U.K. captured the National Lottery account, a very large prize, and Maurice was instrumental in helping the European branch of Bates land a Mars candy account for something called Maltesers. "It's little honey-crunch balls covered in chocolate," explains David Kershaw, who was then the chairman of Saatchi Advertising U.K. "They used to be hugely popular, but they'd gone a bit saggy in England. Well, Maurice said, 'Everyone likes light things, and this is sort of Chocolate Lite.' So, just as an experiment, he got these two glasses of water and brought them into my office. And he took this little slab of ordinary chocolate and put it in a glass of water, and it sank. And then he put a Malteser in the other glass, and it floated. So he said, 'Look! It's light!' It was a real triumph. And he went and showed it to Forrest Mars, and Forrest Mars thought this was wonderful. And we got the Maltesers business."

Herro spent the summer and fall keeping tabs on Maurice. As far as he and his fellow fund managers were concerned, a board chairman serves at the pleasure of the shareholders who elect him. Those shareholders had nearly fired Maurice in the spring; now they considered him to be on parole. To Herro it made no difference that Maurice had created the company, or that to many his talents were among that company's most attractive assets. On the contrary, Herro was being fed a steady diet of anti-Maurice information by sources inside the operating companies and on the board—particularly by Maurice's globalization guru, Theodore Levitt, who over the years had come to view Maurice as an inept manager, a chaotic administrator, and something very much less than the big-picture visionary he was reputed to be. Even Maurice's enemies admitted that his seductive abilities were unrivalled, but he seemed incapable of following up—of closing the deal. That might not have been so bad if he had allowed his underlings to follow up for him, but he appeared to be so jealous of the handful of major relationships he had cultivated that he blocked his lieutenants' access, or else simply dropped the ball in the middle of a deal. The people at Bates, including the network's C.E.O., Michael Bungey, considered Maurice more a hindrance than a help, and, though Maurice had grown increasingly energetic when it came to client relations in Britain, he evinced very little interest in America, where forty-one per cent of the P.L.C.'s business was located. To his critics he appeared self-serving, and even sneaky. They claimed that he had tried to get the company to pay for the press war against Scott by billing it through his ally Bill Muirhead, in the New York office, instead of subjecting it to P.L.C. scrutiny. (Maurice denies the charge.) Directors complained that in the face of board opposition Maurice was trying to stack the board in his favor: that new board members seemed to appear out of nowhere, and that they were all cronies of his—his friend Sir Paul Girolami, formerly of Glaxo, for instance, and his former financial adviser Ali Wambold, from Lazard Frères. And then there was the curious question of the name change, which Maurice virtually banned from discussion. He had gone as far as to order his own hired consultant not to bring it up at a board meeting, despite its being among the consultant's key recommendations.

Perhaps most damning, though, was the accusation that Maurice had not kept up with the advertising industry itself. Was it still true, for instance, that clients demanded plush offices and fine wines—or were they now perhaps a bit put off by visiting an advertising agency that seemed inclined to spend their fees on froufrou? Certainly the London offices of Martin Sorrell's WPP were constructed to look more productive than luxurious. "The world has changed," Maurice concedes. "This is the caring nineties. I walked around for years wearing two balls and a chain attached to my legs at all times. One ball had on it 'Icon of Thatcherism.' And the other ball had on it 'Eighties Excess.' I've grown quite attached to them." But Maurice's harshest judges think his shortcomings go beyond an attachment to eighties excess. "Maurice has a small number of strongly held beliefs," a colleague says. "There are slogans that got fixed in his mind in some earlier time, and whenever he discusses advertising it's essentially discussed in those terms—that the world is growing more global in its habits, and so on. Now, maybe those ideas are actually timeless, but the real question is: How do you make any sense of them on the ground? So, whereas the advertising industry as a whole is completely preoccupied with questions such as 'Where does advertising fit into the new media?' and 'Is fragmentation squeezing them out of it?' and 'What is the shape of the agency of the future?,' and so on and so on, Maurice has remained absolutely untouched by them."



PARTING SHOTS

The board intervened in the feud between Maurice and Charles Scott. But the fuss had awakened some powerful new players.

According to some, that may have been because he was no longer hungry. "It's a dreadful phenomenon here in England that once people attain a certain level of success they then become infatuated with the trappings of upper-class society," a British banker who has closely followed the old company says. "Instead of wanting to be more successful, they want to acquire a title and get to sit beside the Queen at Ascot. So you've got Maurice with this mansion in Sussex, and he would talk to people only if they were chairman of this or Lord This or That. And he forgot what had made the business actually successful—producing ads and being attentive to clients."

It might even be said that the Saatchis had lost touch with the very things that had made them Saatchis. They had begun as counterculture mavericks who prided themselves on playing the establishment game. And they wound up being establishment squires themselves, tooling their raspberry Bentleys through a culture locked into four-wheel drive.

On November 17th, David Herro reappeared. As he made plain in a letter to the board, he was angry that his worries about the P.L.C.'s name hadn't been addressed, and he was angry about the details of the stock-option scheme, which had been made known to shareholders in October—it was far more generous than he thought he had agreed to. On December 8th, Saatchi board members met in New York with Herro and with representatives from the State of Wisconsin Investment Board, the General Electric Investment Corporation, Tiger Asset Management, and M&G Investment Management—a group whose holdings amounted to thirty-five per cent of Saatchi stock. The board members found the shareholders adamant. The stock-option scheme was but one transgression among many. Remove Maurice, the shareholders said, or we will call an Extraordinary General Meeting and fire him ourselves. A new board meeting was set for December 16th in London to settle the matter once and for all.

Maurice was growing aware of the gravity of the situation. Whether or not he had solicited them, letters were pouring in, from such clients as the Mirror Group of British newspapers; British

Airways, again; and the new board member Sir Paul Girolami and the not yet installed board member Ali Wambold. David Kershaw wrote a note, and so did Bill Muirhead. Most surprising, perhaps, was a memo that came from three unlikely comrades-in-arms—Maurice Saatchi, Jeremy Sinclair, and Charles Scott. There was no love lost between Scott and Maurice, certainly, but Scott knew he was no adman, and he took the letters from clients and senior executives seriously enough to realize that Maurice's departure might make Saatchi & Saatchi a very difficult company to run.

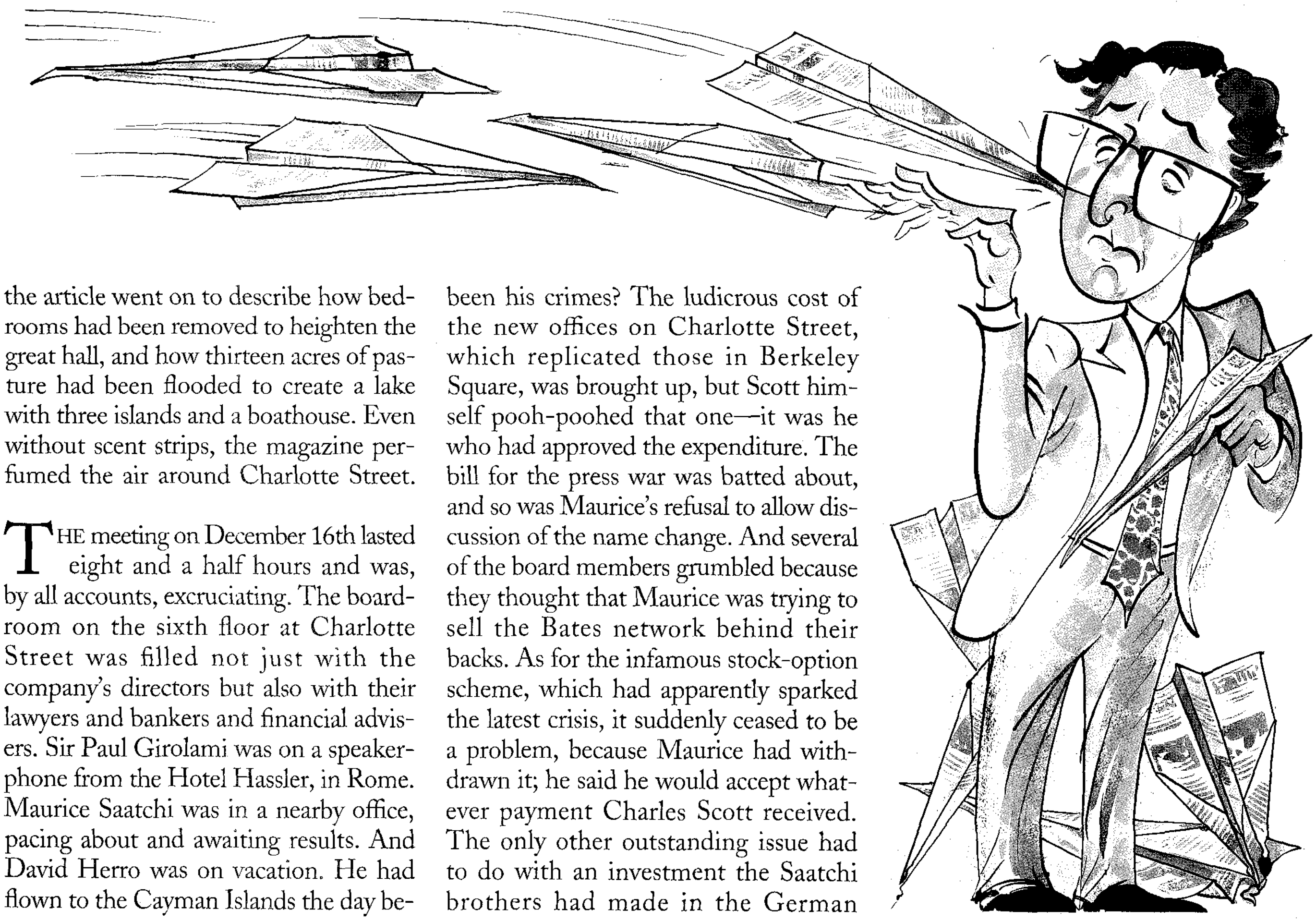
And there was another document making the rounds. The January, 1995, issue of *Architectural Digest* had just appeared, and it featured a tour of Old Hall, the estate that Maurice Saatchi and Josephine Hart had renovated in Sussex. There were no pictures of Maurice, but the photo spread featured Hart looking ethereal among the wisteria. "There's some sort of magic between Maurice and houses," she was quoted as saying, and the article went on to describe how bedrooms had been removed to heighten the great hall, and how thirteen acres of pasture had been flooded to create a lake with three islands and a boathouse. Even without scent strips, the magazine perfumed the air around Charlotte Street.

THE meeting on December 16th lasted eight and a half hours and was, by all accounts, excruciating. The boardroom on the sixth floor at Charlotte Street was filled not just with the company's directors but also with their lawyers and bankers and financial advisers. Sir Paul Girolami was on a speakerphone from the Hotel Hassler, in Rome. Maurice Saatchi was in a nearby office, pacing about and awaiting results. And David Herro was on vacation. He had flown to the Cayman Islands the day before, and much would be made in the British press about how the American "assassin" was sipping beer by the pool while Saatchi & Saatchi burned.

As the meeting proceeded, it became clear that Maurice had only two ardent defenders—Girolami, the newcomer who was auditing the session from Rome, and Jeremy Sinclair, who, despite his reticent manner, would soon be doing a lot of the talking. The day's defining event was the presentation of some poll results compiled by two Saatchi financial consultants, S. G. Warburg and the Union Bank of Switzerland. They had canvassed the company's major shareholders and had come to the stunning conclusion that, no matter what was said or done at the board meeting, if Maurice was not fired there was bound to be an Extraordinary General Meeting, and that at the E.G.M. a substantial majority of shareholders would vote Maurice out.

On the squawk box, Girolami sounded outraged and confused. What did everyone have against Maurice? What had been his crimes? The ludicrous cost of the new offices on Charlotte Street, which replicated those in Berkeley Square, was brought up, but Scott himself pooh-poohed that one—it was he who had approved the expenditure. The bill for the press war was batted about, and so was Maurice's refusal to allow discussion of the name change. And several of the board members grumbled because they thought that Maurice was trying to sell the Bates network behind their backs. As for the infamous stock-option scheme, which had apparently sparked the latest crisis, it suddenly ceased to be a problem, because Maurice had withdrawn it; he said he would accept whatever payment Charles Scott received. The only other outstanding issue had to do with an investment the Saatchi brothers had made in the German sportswear company Adidas at about the time Robert Louis-Dreyfus, then their ally, was on the verge of taking it over and reviving it.

According to *Advertising Age*, the Saatchis' financial stake was tiny, around ten thousand dollars. But the brothers claim that the deal included an option to purchase—in partnership with Louis-Dreyfus and his colleague Thomas Russell (now a Saatchi board member)—the rest of the company later, and at a price that reflected its current woes rather than its anticipated efflorescence. Louis-Dreyfus also hoped the Saatchi brothers would cobble together a new Adidas ad campaign. That didn't work out, and during the summer of 1994 Louis-Dreyfus prepared to buy the rest of the company without the brothers. The Saatchis took him to court, and in July they obtained an order to stop him. Louis-Dreyfus was trapped: his option was due to expire at the end of the year. So in November he settled with the brothers, for forty million dollars. In a



statement announcing the agreement, Louis-Dreyfus wrote, "I very strongly feel that having been offered a free lunch, the Saatchis then demanded the restaurant." Certainly, the massive settlement nettled Thomas Russell. He thought that the forty million dollars was a payoff for the Saatchi brothers' failed Adidas ad campaign, and so belonged not to them but to the P.L.C.

The mood in the meeting steadily darkened. Finally, it was Jeremy Sinclair's turn to speak. "I said, 'This is a bit inconsistent,' " Sinclair recalls. " 'This spring, we unanimously agreed that firing Maurice was not a good thing. All of us. Well, if it's not a good thing you shouldn't do it.' And they said, 'Ah, but now the consequences of us not doing this bad thing will be six weeks of battle in the press prior to Herro's Extraordinary General Meeting, and there will be too much nasty noise. And at the E.G.M. Maurice will be ousted anyway.' And I said, 'That may well be so, but you are not responsible for other people's actions. You will be held accountable for what *you* have done.' "

From Rome, Girolami spoke up. As far as he was concerned, he said, this was no way to run a company. But then he asked a fatal question: How many of the non-executive directors stood with him against Maurice's ouster? The answer was none. And, with that, Maurice's allies gave up the fight.

Still, a conundrum remained. If Maurice was to be dethroned, what was to be done with him? The board decided to make Jeremy Sinclair acting chairman and to present Maurice with an offer: he would be made joint president of the holding company with his brother Charles, and he would also become chairman of the Saatchi & Saatchi Advertising Worldwide network. Sinclair trundled over to Maurice's office, where he found Maurice unexpectedly amenable. And a few minutes later Maurice himself entered the boardroom, ready to step down and take the new job—but on two conditions. First, he wanted a contract that would let him resign at any time without any clauses barring him from setting up a competitive agency—this so that if David Herro came zooming back again Maurice had a way out. The board agreed. And, second, he wanted to be paid the same as the other senior operating executives, the same as Michael Bungey, who ran Bates, and Ed Wax, the C.E.O. of Saatchi & Saatchi Advertising Worldwide.

For some reason, this second condition stopped the show. The board asked to confer on the matter of Maurice's compensation, and Maurice left the room. He waited twenty minutes. Silence. He allowed another fifteen. More silence. Finally, he returned to the boardroom and announced that he had changed his mind. He could not decide so quickly after all. By dithering over the details, the board had lost the sale. Now they would have to wait until after the Christmas holidays to hear whether he would accept their plans for him.

ACTUALLY, he was tempted. "My thinking was that it was a great job," Maurice says. "I've heard people say it was a demeaning job. I didn't think it demeaning at all. What could be better than being the chairman of Saatchi & Saatchi? But if Saatchi & Saatchi was to be owned by David Herro, I decided in the end, I couldn't do it."

On January 3, 1995, he announced his decision, telling his former employees that "Saatchi & Saatchi has been taken over. . . . The new 'owners'—a group of shareholders owning around 30% of the shares—have found a simple, if crude, method of controlling the Company. By threatening the Directors with an Extraordinary General Meeting—at which they could outvote others—they have given the Directors their orders: 'Take your Chairman into a corner and shoot him quickly—we don't want the fuss of a public trial.' "

The next sound the advertising world heard was the clatter of falling dominoes. The three senior executives who had warned that they would take it hard if Maurice was ousted—Jeremy Sinclair, Bill Muirhead, and David Kershaw—took it hard. They decided to resign from Saatchi & Saatchi and form their own agency, with Maurice and Charles Saatchi as equal partners. On January 9th, Maurice arranged a meeting at his London house with several of his favorite employees—some thirty or forty, depending on whom you believe—and a few days later he sent out a series of simple form letters that began "I, Maurice Saatchi, would be delighted to offer you a job in my new advertising agency."

A rash of resignations followed. The old Saatchi & Saatchi called out its lawyers. Most of the defectors were still under contract, and those contracts forbade them to work for any competing advertising firm over a set period—sometimes one or two years. Meanwhile, until their status was determined in the courts (a decision is expected this summer), the runaways had to remain on what in England is quaintly known as "garden leave": they would continue to be paid by the old company, but they would not report to work, nor could they go to work for the New Saatchi Agency. In mid-February, however, a British judge ruled that Kershaw, Muirhead, and Sinclair could take noncompetitive "preparatory steps" toward joining New Saatchi, as long as they did not solicit any of the clients or the staff of the old Saatchi. Ever since, the three have been squirrelled away in an apartment on the eighth floor of a building near Piccadilly—a building that, since they are on garden leave, they refer to as "the potting shed."

Accusations ricocheted back and forth. The old Saatchi alleged that Maurice had pilfered company files. It unearthed information indicating that the brothers had moved £2.9 million from one pension scheme to another "for their benefit" back in 1989, and it warned darkly that "the basis of the calculation is being reviewed" and that "legal advice is being taken." (Maurice denies any impropriety.) Charles Saatchi, meanwhile, officially departed to join his brother—and, for good measure, announced that he was considering suing the old company for "constructive dismissal." Maurice's enemies said that the brothers were using the forty million dollars they had won from Louis-Dreyfus in the Adidas settlement to fund the New Saatchi, and the old Saatchi put in motion a suit to get the money back. (Maurice's allies said that all this was a bit moot, since Louis-Dreyfus hadn't got around to paying up yet.) Sinclair, Kershaw, and Muirhead—now known in the press as the Three Amigos—claimed that friends and relatives of theirs had been getting phone calls from mysterious people who, when the friends and relatives picked up the phone, asked for their names and then claimed to be British Telecom workers checking listings. The Amigos believed that someone at the old Saatchi had rifled the records of the defectors' phone calls to see whether they had been telephoning clients in violation of their contracts. And, in New York, Muirhead was accused of walking out of the Saatchi & Saatchi North America building on the weekend before his resignation with boxes of files under his arms, even though security videos indicate that all he was carrying was his briefcase and a green plastic Harrods bag—and that, in any event, he was accompanied as he left by Alan Bishop, his successor as the head of Saatchi North America. Muirhead sued Saatchi & Saatchi for libel.

The next falling domino made a louder crash: the clients who had threatened to place their accounts under review did exactly that. The Mirror Group, which publishes the London *Daily Mirror* and the *Independent* (its billings amount to £8.4 million), renounced the old Saatchi and signed on with the New. So did Gallaher, the Silk Cut company (with billings of twelve million pounds). And so did Dixons, a chain of retail electronics stores (with billings of forty-nine million pounds).

And then, on February 22nd, came the punishment that devastated the old Saatchi. Mars, the giant food company with billings estimated at four hundred million dollars, notified Saatchi & Saatchi that it would be withdrawing all its advertising from Saatchi & Saatchi Worldwide and from Bates—a move that was the more remarkable because Mars had been employing Bates since 1954. The Mars pullout meant a loss to Saatchi & Saatchi of $47.4 million, or about four per cent of its $1.2 billion in annual revenues. And for Bates the blow was even more staggering: seven or eight per cent of its total billings were wiped out. Since Mars was Bates's only truly international client, some of the offices that Bates maintained in forty other countries would now stand virtually idle. (Mars did not place any of its advertising with the New Saatchi Agency, but no one expected it to, because the New Saatchi was, at the time, too new and untested.) Rather wistfully, Wendy Smyth, the acting chief operating officer of Saatchi & Saatchi P.L.C., told the *Times*, "We didn't actually believe they would've taken all the business away."

But why didn't they "actually believe" it? What could have been clearer than the May letter from John and Forrest Mars? And what could have been clearer than the two letters from Sir Colin Marshall, of British Airways? As Maurice Saatchi fed the press questions like these, the old company's stock capsized. From a price of a hundred and fifty-four pence before Maurice's ouster, it fell to a hundred and nine, then to a hundred, and finally bottomed out just above eighty before inching upward again. And, as observers condemned both sides for tarnishing the reputation of admen everywhere, the old Saatchi finally did what David Herro and his cohorts had always wanted it to do: it changed the holding company's name. Saatchi & Saatchi P.L.C. would now be Cordiant—a designation selected, according to a letter to shareholders, "as an expression of the new spirit within the company, characterized by accord and shared purpose." Even Maurice's staunchest foes had to admit that the new name was a hoot—just the sort of pretentious yet unmemorable noise that might have been expected from bean counters playing at being admen. Maurice and the Three Amigos immediately began calling their former company Cormorant.

SAATCHI & SAATCHI
MEETING IN PROGRESS

BOARDROOM COUP *Maurice's fate was decided in a meeting that lasted eight and a half hours.*

"IT doesn't add up," Maurice Saatchi says, echoing an editorial in *Advertising Age*. And it's true that from Maurice's point of view the story is at once straightforward and incomprehensible: A brash young American shareholder, trying to make a name for himself the way a lot of these swaggering Americans apparently do, ignores every warning from clients and executives, lassos a celebrated but controversial chairman, and pulls him down. And in so doing he also decimates the company's earnings and destroys the very share price he has told the world he was defending. To Maurice and his boosters it all seems too crazy. Could there have been something more going on?

Among the conspiratorial—and Maurice's camp is nothing if not conspiratorial—suspicion fell on Robert Louis-Dreyfus. He would naturally be angry at having to pay the Saatchis forty million dollars in the Adidas affair. He would want revenge, and he would see in David Herro a willing accomplice. Yet Herro seems to have had very little contact with Louis-Dreyfus, and, besides, the timing is all wrong. Herro's first moves against Maurice were in March, 1994, and the Saatchis didn't take their court action against Louis-Dreyfus until July.

What else, then? Could Herro have been trying to lower the share price on purpose, as certain insiders have speculated, so as to help a person or persons unknown engineer a takeover? But if that were true the takeover battle would have begun by now. And who would want to acquire all that old Saatchi & Saatchi debt? No, in order to make the story add up, one has to take a somewhat more complex view.

EVEN the casual observer might agree that Maurice was a very naughty board chairman, but then even his enemies have to admit that his offenses, taken one by one, look rather petty. To

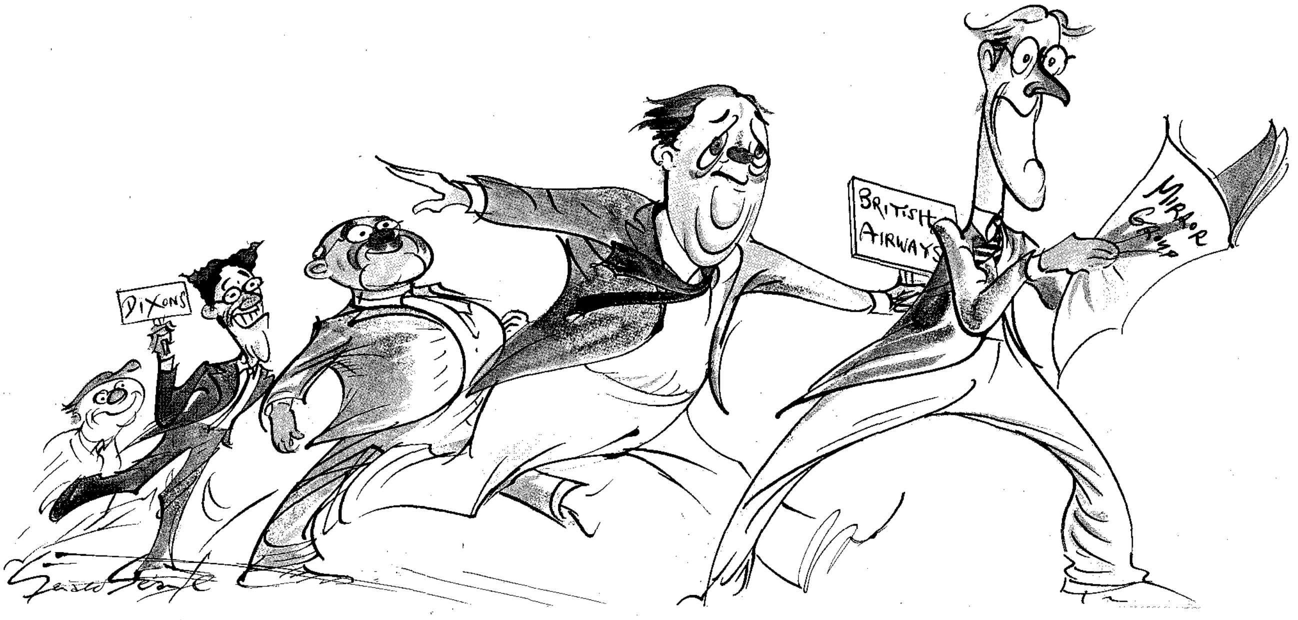
Herro, however, it was the accumulation of small trespasses that revealed the deeper stain. "You know, in his resignation letter Maurice said, 'We've been taken over,' " Herro explains. "Well, we were the ones who had invested in the company when it was about to fall apart. The point wasn't that the brothers spent frivolously, and so on and so forth. The point, at least from a shareholder's perspective, is that a chairman of the board's job is to make sure that the shareholders' interests are represented in the management of the company." What astonishes Herro is Maurice's refusal to realize that when he took his company public he had given himself a new boss. "Public companies are owned by the people who have stock," Herro says. "We elect Maurice Saatchi to chair a board to represent our interests. What he was doing was ignoring our interests and putting his before ours. And to other owners of the company that is inappropriate behavior for a chairman."

If you listen long enough to David Herro, you begin to recognize that his way of talking about the Saatchi case resembles that of none of the other dramatis personae. Bring up the threatening letters from Mars and British Airways, and he doesn't seem to care that they turned out to have been serious warnings about devastation to come. Instead, Herro says, "Maurice's use of those letters was a form of extortion. He was saying, 'O.K., if you guys are going to do that, I'm going to trash the company.' So does that give him permission to do anything he wants?" A few minutes later, Herro grows philosophical. "I really believe that one must live one's life by principles," he says. "We're only on the planet for eighty-five years, for the God's sake. And you do what's right, and you don't try to cut corners and cheat. And in this case we had a responsibility as major shareholders to elect members that represent us and the company's best interests. You don't just do the easy thing all the time."

The Saatchi brothers had drunk deep from the well of American culture, but in David Herro they encountered something they had never seen before: an American crusader, a Puritan on a mission. America, in fact, is rife with Herros, and when the inquisitorial mood is upon us, as it is now, crusaders and Puritans can stir up a great deal of fervor. The inquisitorial mood cares nothing for practicality. A political candidate may be a visionary thinker and a skilled policymaker, but if his personal life is slightly greasy, then out he goes. So, when Maurice thought that it would make a difference to the crusading American shareholders that losing him would also mean losing huge clients, losing top executives, and ruining the share price, he was demonstrating how little, finally, he understood America. Herro didn't need Robert Louis-Dreyfus behind him, or Charles Scott, or anyone else. He believed he had principle on his side. He did what he did for a starkly simple reason: he thought he was right.

In fact, the issue that was probably most irksome to Herro was Maurice's refusal to consider the name change. In Herro's eyes, that summed up everything that was wrong with Maurice Saatchi: even if changing the name of the holding company would benefit the entire organization, Maurice was going to make sure it never happened. True, one might well expect him to be attached to his own name, but there was something more at work here: to him, the name appears to have had an almost mystical import. It signified the brotherly bond that was the company's greatest asset; it signified the single-minded conviction and energy that were central to Saatchi culture; it signified the grand illusion that willing a thing could make it so—that nothing was impossible. If you were talking to Maurice Saatchi and you brought up the name change, you would sometimes see him slip into a kind of fugue. His voice would tighten and rise. "It is *my* name," he would murmur. "It's also a *great* name."

And it is this issue, more than the folderol over the lavish Bentley bills and the offices in Berkeley Square, that most powerfully symbolizes the unbridgeable gap between the two sides in the Saatchi dispute. For how could Maurice Saatchi ever reconcile himself to the fact that once the company he invented had gone public it was no longer his, that the owners were now faceless investors who didn't know a thing about advertising, and, moreover, weren't required to? And how could David Herro ever reconcile himself to the notion that in Maurice's mind a



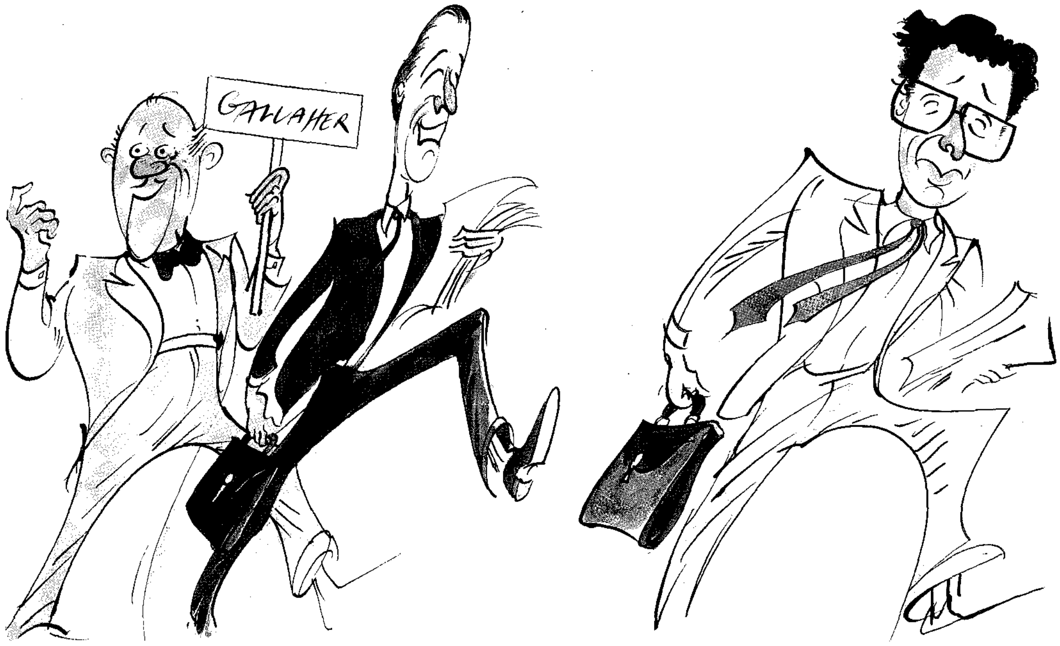
ACCOUNT CLOSED *Many of Maurice's most important clients followed him out the door, making his exit what has been called the costliest removal of a chairman in recent memory.*

company is not just an aggregation of shares, or even of buildings and employees, but a projection of its creators' will, its creators' name, its creators' self?

To a lot of people, what David Herro brought about is a calamity—the costliest removal of a company chairman in recent memory. Herro, of course, disagrees, and it is probably not surprising that many of the survivors at Cordiant continue to praise what he did. The losses have been tremendous, they say, but not as tremendous as most people think. Almost all the executives who left the company were Maurice's old pals from the Saatchi & Saatchi subsidiary in the United Kingdom, and some observers rate their talents less highly than others. And, certainly, few at the Bates network will miss Maurice.

The client losses are more damaging, but the Mirror Group and Gallaher are tiny accounts, and Cordiant's adherents claim that new business has more than made up for their loss. The Mars evacuation was a real jolt, they agree, but not a fatal one, and there are a number of very large clients who have remained steadfast, among them Toyota Motor Sales USA, Hewlett-Packard, the British American Tobacco Company, Miller Brewing Co., and, the biggest of them all, Procter & Gamble. The loss of the British Airways account sent a shudder through Cordiant, but only the most naïve at that company had expected to retain the account. What they were really rooting for was an anybody-but-Maurice decision. B.A.'s embrace of New Saatchi stands as a powerful symbolic rebuke against Cordiant for deposing Maurice—and this in an industry that traffics in symbolism. Moreover, the sting of it won't easily subside, especially since other clients, who had been waiting to see what B.A. would do, are now likely to cast their lots with Maurice as well. It was Jeremy Sinclair who best summed up the situation when, at the height of the dispute last spring, as the non-executive board members huddled to decide whether to fire Maurice, he asked them, "Who's the best door-opener in the business? Maurice Saatchi. And who's the best at handling the company's finances? Charlie Scott. So you've got to start from a completely different premise. You've got to start from the premise that we need both of them."

For the moment, however, it looks as though the Saatchi brothers will not need Saatchi & Saatchi. They have recently formed an alliance with the giant French firm Publicis, which means that they now have a powerful international network to draw on in attracting the international clients—British Airways, for instance—that they need to survive. And during the next several weeks, as the first wave of court cases is resolved, the Three Amigos and their compatriots will probably be able to put away their rakes and hoes and join up openly with Maurice; in cases like theirs, British courts have tended to rule in favor of allowing workers to get to work.



Maurice has recently heightened the general air of absurdity by setting up life-size cardboard cutouts of Sinclair, Muirhead, and Kershaw at British Airways account presentations. And, quite naturally, the drama of the situation has attracted notice from afar. According to Maurice, the William Morris Agency has been sniffing around with the idea of turning the Saatchi melee into a movie. Maurice jokes about being played by Kevin Costner, though casting anyone but Michael Caine in the role would seem a violation of natural law.

At this point, it looks unlikely that the brothers will attempt to take New Saatchi public, but Maurice doesn't rule it out. He says he has nothing against public companies, nothing against shareholders—well, most shareholders. Still, it is doubtful whether he will ever attempt to make of New Saatchi the wriggling hydra that Saatchi & Saatchi P.L.C. once was. The recent strife has been painful, but Maurice appears to have been revitalized by it; certainly his activities since the ouster have indicated that he is anything but a useless holdover from the eighties who has forgotten how to close a deal.

Probably he would not like the world to believe that his unseating has taught him a lesson. But he is at least willing to say this: "All these proverbs that have been handed down from our grandmothers, like 'Stick to your knitting,' are true. Presumably, the reason they go on for thousands of years is that people keep on ignoring them." ♦

LETTER FROM THE ANDES

THE NEW POLITICS OF COCA

To get crack off American streets, Washington wants to eradicate coca. But Andean Indians contend that it is a mistake to demonize the plant they hold sacred, and a surprising new coalition of scientists and politicians agrees.

BY ANDREW WEIL

BALDOMERO CÁCERES—Baldo for short—would look for all the world like a Parisian boulevardier, complete with beret, walking stick, neat mustache, and jaunty bearing, if it were not for his finely woven poncho and a bulge in his cheek where he is working a quid of coca leaves mixed with a little baking soda. This is not Paris but Lima, and Baldo is on his daily walk from his garden apartment in the Miraflores district to the main office of the Empresa Nacional de la Coca, where he works as a consultant. The Empresa Nacional de la Coca (ENACO) is a government agency in charge of all legal cultivation, distribution, and sale of coca leaves in Peru. A social psychologist by training, Cáceres has a sharp intellect and a lively wit, loves good conversation, and is a formidable opponent in debate. He is a confirmed eccentric and a passionate defender of coca, a plant that has a bad reputation because it is the source of cocaine. He is also better acquainted with the scholarly literature on coca than anyone else I know.

"I am a Limeño," Baldo says, "a Hispanic-American of European descent living in a colonial city, but my heart is in Cuzco," the Incas' capital. He was for a time academic vice-rector of the National University in Cuzco, and it was there that he was introduced to the custom of coca chewing—not by Indians but by a visiting scholar from Warsaw who was an expert on Quechua language and culture. "Imagine that," he says as we walk along a quiet residential street. "A foreigner had to make me aware of this natural treasure in my own country." Thereafter, his interest in the sacred leaf of the Incas developed steadily; he also began to experience beneficial health effects from its use. In his office, Baldo has built up a coca library, and in the window he has a coca plant that he got as a seedling and nurses through the gray days of Lima's winter.

"Have you ever read this?" Baldo asked, handing me a photocopied page of a book in Spanish. "It is the first documented account of the use of coca by New World Indians." What Baldo gave me was an excerpt from the journal that Amerigo Vespucci kept during his second voyage to America, in 1499, and which describes an encounter off the Caribbean coast of what is now Venezuela:

> We descried an island in the sea that lay about 15 leagues from the coast and decided to go there to see if it was inhabited. We found there the most bestial and ugly people we had ever seen: very ugly of face and expression, and all of them had their cheeks full of a green herb that they chewed constantly like beasts, so that they could barely speak; and each one carried about his neck two gourds, one of them full of that herb that they had in their mouths and the other of a white powder that looked like pulverized plaster, and from time to time, they dipped a stick into the powder after wetting it in the mouth, then put the stick in the mouth, an end in each cheek, in order to apply powder to the herb that they chewed; they did this very frequently. We were amazed at this thing and could not understand its secret or why they did it.

The green herb was certainly *Erythroxylum novogranatense*, of the variety now known as Colombian coca, and the white powder was almost certainly lime made from roasted seashells, one of several alkalis that Indians use with the leaves in order to make the chewing of them more enjoyable. Alkalinity facilitates absorption of cocaine, the stimulating alkaloid that is coca's most important constituent.

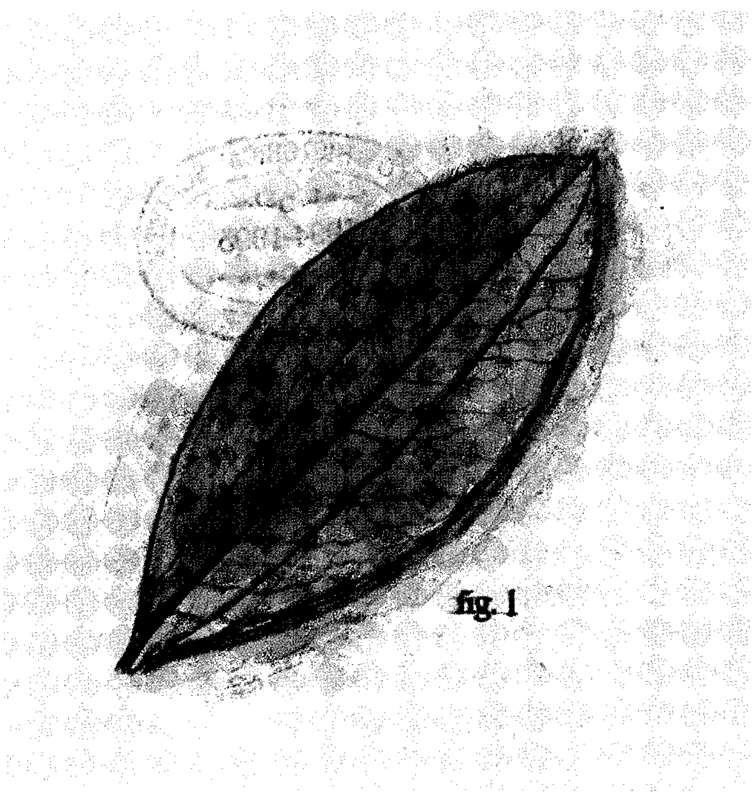
Although the use of coca has disappeared from islands in the Caribbean and from Venezuela, to this day Kogi and Ika Indians of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, the snow-covered mountains that rise just inland from Colombia's north coast, use this same variety in just the same way. The men of these tribes equate dedication to coca chewing with dedication to spirituality and higher pursuits. Using a different species of *Erythroxylum* and different alkalis, millions of Indians in the Andes of Peru and Bolivia still chew coca every day; they also employ it in their folk medicine as the *gran remedio*—the great remedy—for ailments as diverse as toothache and altitude sickness, and incorporate it centrally into all their cultural, magical, and spiritual practices.

The word "coca" derives from an Aymara word that means simply "tree." Prior to the Conquest, Indians used various names for the several varieties of cultivated *Erythroxylum*. The Spanish took the name "coca" from the southern reaches of the Incan empire and brought it into use throughout their domain. The Incas regarded it as a gift from the gods intended to improve human life; its leaves are sacred. They have personified the spirit of the plant as Mama Coca, a divine and beneficent aspect of nature.

Why coca chewing so offended European sensibilities—when, for example, the equally alien custom of smoking tobacco did not—is a matter of speculation. The answer may be contained in Vespucci's words "they chewed constantly like beasts." Baldo points to this phrase with a grin; working a wad of leaves in the mouth clearly reminded Europeans of chewing a cud, a behavior incompatible with humanness. Smoking tobacco may have looked strange, but it did not provoke any uncomfortable association with domestic animals.

Although many mestizo peoples in the region extending from Colombia to northern Argentina have taken up the Indian habit of coca chewing, and many more use the leaf occasionally as a folk remedy, the dominant culture—that is, the European culture—has always disputed the native contention that coca is beneficial. Over the centuries, many experts have argued that *coqueros* (coca users) are in fact indulging in a harmful, addictive vice and rationalizing their indulgence with unfounded claims of imagined benefits.

In recent years, the production and distribution of coca have, of course, become matters of great international concern, because of a distinctly modern phenomenon: the epidemic use of isolated cocaine. From the same Caribbean coast where Vespucci first encountered coca, enormous quantities of refined cocaine hydrochloride now leave for Miami and other ports in North America and Europe. In both North and South America, fewer affluent people are putting this "powder cocaine" in their noses than did so a decade ago, but an enormous surge in the use of crack cocaine, a purer, smokable form of the drug, has occurred in the underclass, and especially among disadvantaged youth in inner cities. The news is full of stories about crack houses, crack babies, crack addicts, and crack wars. These patterns of use cause as much alarm and as many demands for repressive action in South America as they do in the North. It was sensational publicity about crack cocaine that escalated the war on drugs, and it is fear of crack cocaine that continues to paralyze efforts to reform drug policy.



A new leaf: A clash of Western and indigenous values is at the center of a battle over the image of a plant.

One frequent response of authorities on both continents is to blame the coca plant for all the troubles with cocaine. If there were no coca, there would be no cocaine, no *toxicómanos* smoking unrefined cocaine in the slums of Lima, no nightmare of crack in Middle America. Coca is now seen not just as a bestial habit of Indians but as the source of the epidemic that is destroying many cities and their youth. An obvious solution is to eradicate coca from the earth. The United Nations has endorsed this policy, and Washington has tried to put it into effect.

But coca is still the sacred plant of large populations of South American Indians, and those people and, increasingly, their governments passionately resent the efforts of descendants of conquistadores to eradicate it. The bitter intercultural dissension has become even more heated in recent years, as Andean Indians have found a collective voice and as a new generation of Western experts, trained to recognize and respect the values of other cultures, has come to their defense. In October, 1992, on the occasion of the Columbus quincentenary, thousands of angry Indians marched on Cuzco to call for an end to "five hundred years of European domination and oppression." High on their list of demands was cessation of attempts by the United States and the United Nations to do away with coca. A tract that circulated through Cuzco during the march was headed (in both Spanish and Quechua) "The Sacred Coca Leaf Lives: 500 Years of Indigenous and Popular Resistance." It began with these words:

> Coca is an Andean product, whose domestication and use date back four thousand to six thousand years ago.
>
> Cocaine is a European invention of 130 years ago.
>
> Both products stimulate the cultural values of their respective societies:
>
> Coca enhances community, sociability, and the communal spirit.
>
> Cocaine is the maximum expression of so-called "Western" individualism; it isolates the individual, not only from other people but from all reality.

So the lines of battle have been drawn, and now a new political alignment is forming in the coca-producing countries of South America. Joining the Indians in their demand that coca be reassessed is an unlikely assortment of intellectuals, economists, politicians, and scientists who believe that coca should be developed for legitimate uses. These latter-day defenders of coca would like to see the repeal of international laws that currently block commerce in coca products; if more legal markets existed for coca, they say, fewer leaves would be processed into cocaine, the black market would begin to shrink, and licit economies would thrive. In Peru, Baldomero Cáceres and his work at ENACO illustrate the new politics of coca. In Bolivia, the government has been committed to trying to change world opinion about coca, as a necessary first step in making exports possible.

FEW people outside the growing regions of South America know much about the shrub that is at the center of this storm. Many North Americans still confuse coca with cocoa, a product made from an unrelated species (*Theobroma cacao*, the chocolate tree). In fact, the plants known collectively as coca are all members of the family Erythroxylaceae, which has only one genus, comprising some two hundred and fifty species of shrubs and medium-sized trees, most of which grow wild in tropical America. Four distinct varieties of cultivated coca are known to have been in use at the time of the Spanish Conquest, and all are still in use today. The cocas of Colombia and the north coastal desert of Peru are two varieties of the species *E. novogranatense*, and those of southern Peru, Bolivia, and the Amazonian rain forest are two varieties of *E. coca*.

Archeological evidence of coca chewing includes small ceramic containers that were used for lime in the Valdivia culture of southwestern Ecuador and that date back to about 2100 B.C. A ceramic figurine

JACK MOLLOY

"I was under the impression that the sex we were having was recreational!"

• •

dated between 1600 and 1500 B.C. from this same culture clearly depicts the bulging cheek of a coca chewer; it is the earliest surviving example of a long tradition of ceramic figures representing *coqueros*. In the light of the evidence, it seems likely that coca chewing—and possibly coca cultivation—was established in Ecuador by 2500 B.C., making coca one of the first plants domesticated by human beings in the New World.

It would be impossible to catalogue all the ways that coca permeates the culture, medicine, and religion of Andean Indians, so central is it to life in this whole region. It becomes clear to anyone who spends time in Quechua or Aymara villages how important the sacred leaf is to them. As a botanist and physician, I have made many trips to Peru; I have often seen a Quechua Indian begin to chew by selecting three perfect leaves, arranging them in the shape of a fan, then blowing on them and whispering prayers to them before putting them in his mouth. Indians exchange and use coca at all major functions: births, weddings, funerals, dedications of new dwellings, drawings up of contracts, healing ceremonies, magic rites. Chewing coca gives pleasure, but, as many commentators point out, that pleasure is as much social as it is pharmacological.

Not only is coca fully integrated into Andean society but it is also an integral part of the region's ecosystem—a stubborn and dismaying biological fact impeding those who would like to make it disappear. As a cultivated plant, coca is nearly ideal. It has few predators and pests, in part because of the cocaine content of the leaves; indeed, that may have evolved, originally, as a defense against predators. The plant will grow in soils too poor and on slopes too steep to support other crops, will live for forty years or more, and will tolerate many harvests a year.

No one knows exactly how much coca Peru and Bolivia produce or what percentage of it goes into the black market, but total production continues to increase despite all efforts to stop it. Official estimates for 1994 were that Peru had more than two hundred and sixty-eight thousand acres of mature coca under cultivation and produced a hundred and eighty-two thousand tons of leaves; for Bolivia, the figures were a hundred and nineteen thousand acres and ninety-nine thousand tons of leaves. Of the hundreds of thousands of tons of leaves harvested annually in Peru, ENACO is lucky if it controls five per cent. The rest are all, as the phrase has it, diverted. The diversion is to the jungle kitchens, from which *pasta básica* (unrefined cocaine) is shipped off by river to Colombia for processing into powder cocaine destined for points north. Bolivia does not have a government coca agency to monitor legal production, but the situation there is the same.

The last time I visited the coca market in Cuzco, an Indian vender tried hard to get my business, crying *"Compre mis hojitas, Señor. Llevan cocaína!"* "Buy my leaves, Mister. They have cocaine in them!"

THE least-known cultivated variety of coca in South America, *E. coca* var. *ipadu*, is found in Amazonia. In parts of Colombia, Peru, and Brazil, numerous tribes of the upper Amazon use it under the name *ipadú*. Between 1973 and 1981, I made a number of visits to one of the *ipadú*-using tribes—the Cubeos of the Río Cuduyarí, in the Vaupés territory of southeastern Colombia, near the border with Brazil. The small village I chose to stay in had ten huts and a large *maloca*, or communal house. It was a two-day canoe trip or a half day's motorboat trip upriver from a scruffy frontier town called Mitú, which is the territorial capital. One afternoon shortly after I arrived on my first visit, the chief of the tribe, a vigorous man who went by the title Capitán, took me to see one of his coca fields. We walked for about half an hour through dense jungle, then came to a large cleared area, planted with yuca (tapioca root), pineapples, chilies, and coca. The coca plants were about three feet tall and looked as if they were being harvested continually. Their leaves were a glossy green and much larger and thicker than those of the common coca I knew from the Andes. The chief and I filled a large basket with leaves and carried them back to the village.

Another distinctive feature of this variety is its low cocaine content—less than half that of the other varieties. In order to compensate for the low potency and tough texture of the leaves, Amazonian Indians have developed a unique method of using their coca, which I learned about as soon as the Capitán and I got back to the village with our harvest. His wife took the basket and emptied it into a large earthenware pan over a wood fire. Using one hand and a paddle woven of reeds, she tossed the leaves constantly until they were toasted crisp and bright green. The chief loaded the toasted leaves into a tall mortar made of a hollowed-out hardwood log and began to pound them with a heavy wooden pestle. He did this until he had reduced them to a very fine powder. Meanwhile, his wife took bunches of huge leaves from a common jungle tree and burned them to ashes over the fire; these would provide the necessary alkalinity. The chief added handfuls of ashes to the mortar and kept pounding. Then he sifted the mixture through a fine cloth bag, shaking it into a can. The final product was a gray-green dust with the texture of flour. The coca was ready.

The Capitán offered me a gourd containing this prepared *ipadú*, but I told him I did not know how to use it. He gave me a cardboard scoop and indicated that I should put a heaping spoonful in my mouth. I did so and, in the next instant, found myself choking on the dust, unable to breathe.

"*Cuidado! Es peligroso!*" the Indians shouted, a bit too late. The trick to using *ipadú* is to moisten the powder into a coherent gob and tuck it into the cheek before you take a deep breath. Once I had mastered the technique, I found that I could relax and concentrate on the taste and the effect. The stuff had a smoky, toasted-green-vegetable flavor. After a few minutes, a pleasant, tingling-numbing sensation pervaded my mouth, and the usual sensations of chewing coca followed: a warm, satisfying feeling in the stomach and a subtle sensation of energy coursing through the body, accompanied by a brightening of mood. I exchanged smiles with my Indian hosts. They were delighted that I liked their coca. Soon we were all taking turns pounding leaves with the pestle.

During my stays in the village, I often helped the Indians in their daily task of preparing coca—it's hard work—and I always used it with them. It seemed to me that it combined the functions in our society of coffee and chewing gum, and I saw it used in only two situations. In the mornings, if any *ipadú* remained from the night before, men would consume it before going out to do the day's work, such as chopping down trees or fishing. But mostly I saw coca used as a social ritual in the afternoons and evenings, when work was done and the people of the village came together to prepare coca and talk. Sometimes they would gather in the *maloca* to play music on reed flutes, dance, and drink *chicha*—a low-alcohol beer made from yuca or the starchy fruit of the peach palm. The effects of coca on the Cubeos seemed to me to be as different from the effects of crack cocaine on users in our society as day from night.

In the past, only adult men used coca; it was taboo for women to have any contact with the plant. At the time of my first visit, that taboo was breaking down, and over the years I saw more and more women of the tribe using coca along with the men, especially in the evenings and at the fiestas. Children and adolescents never used it, nor did they display any curiosity about it.

I never saw any abuse of coca among these people. They were not addicted to it. Sometimes men of the tribe would hire out as rubber-tree tappers in distant parts of the forest for six months or a year at a time. During these periods, they would be without coca. They missed it, because they liked it, they said, but experienced no difficulty in being away from it. I saw no physical or mental problems associated with its use, and the Cubeos, like all Indian *coqueros* I've talked to on the subject, believed that coca improved their health and gave them longer lives. The oldest man of the village, in his seventies, was also the heaviest consumer. He could paddle a canoe faster than I could, and was in better physical and mental condition than many seventy-year-olds I see in the United States.

But in the short space of eight years I watched this little community fall apart as a result of contact with the cocaine trade. Colombian mafiosi began to arrive in the Vaupés in the mid-seventies, with schemes of recruiting Indians to cultivate coca for the black market. Plantations in the rain forest would be difficult to spot and easy

"Do you want that with or without angioplasty?"

to service by river, and might reduce the dependence of the Colombian refineries on coca produced in distant Peru and Bolivia. When these men with rolls of cash showed up in their speedboats, the Indians were dazzled by dreams of becoming rich overnight and finally being able to buy the goods they coveted in the Mitú store. The Cubeos became dependent on guns, bullets, flashlights, and outboard motors; they liked metal cooking pots, cloth, and transistor radios, but they'd had nothing to sell for cash except their own labor. Here was a way—the first way they had ever seen—of breaking into the cash economy of Mitú.

Of course, it didn't work out as they expected. They rushed off to plant as much coca as they could, and in doing so they neglected their food crops and, for the first time, experienced shortages. The outsiders who began showing up in their territory were not nice people and certainly did not have the best interests of the Cubeos at heart. They always came in speedboats, which made it possible for Indians to get rides to Mitú in an hour instead of two days, and they provided enough cash for Indians to buy distilled alcohol there—a product of civilization I had never seen in the village.

On my last visit to the Río Cuduyarí, the whole settlement was in disarray, with the *maloca* untended and food scarce. On one occasion, when the Indians tried to hold a fiesta to celebrate my return, cane whiskey appeared instead of *chicha* and coca, and the fiesta was over in less than an hour, with many of the men lying drunk on the ground. One of these was the oldest man of the village, whose health and vigor I had so admired; when I last saw him, he was semiconscious, with blood streaming down his face as a result of a fall. When I left the next day, in a motorboat, my spirits were low. All I could think of was that my society, with its ever growing demand for cocaine, was responsible for the decline of this community that had so recently been an inspiring example of how people can maintain a stable society while using psychoactive plants.

SCIENTISTS in Europe took little interest in coca until 1859, when an Italian neurologist, Paolo Mantegazza, wrote an essay on the hygienic and medicinal virtues of the leaves. Mantegazza wrote effusively of his own experiences ("I would prefer a life of ten years with coca to one of a hundred thousand without it"), and his essay was widely read and became very influential. Within a year of its publication, a German chemist isolated cocaine from coca and, in the spirit of the new science of pharmacology, released it to the world as the "active principle" of *Erythroxylum*. As a result, much scientific interest shifted from the plant to the pure alkaloid.

In the eighteen-sixties, medical doctors began to experiment with both coca and cocaine for the treatment of various ailments. A number of coca tonics became available, including Vin Tonique Mariani à la Coca du Pérou, a red Bordeaux wine combined with an extract of select coca leaves, which was manufactured in Paris and dispensed by prescription. It became the most popular prescribed remedy in the world and was used regularly by celebrities, who contributed glowing testimonials about its benefits, which appeared in promotional volumes that its inventor, Angelo Mariani, issued from time to time. (Among the contributors were Thomas Edison, H. G. Wells, Alexandre Dumas *fils*, and Pope Leo XIII, who awarded Mariani a Vatican gold medal and always carried a hip flask of the elixir.) In America, the Parke, Davis company made a less glamorous standardized tincture of *Erythroxylum*, and in 1880, in the Detroit *Therapeutic Gazette*, a Dr. W. H. Bentley reported his successful use of this product to cure patients of addiction to opium and morphine. In 1883, a German doctor surreptitiously put cocaine in the drinking water of Bavarian soldiers before they went on maneuvers, and reported that their endurance increased as a result.

It was at this time that the young Sigmund Freud, then desperately looking for a way to make a name for himself, was inspired by Mantegazza's essay to experiment with *Erythroxylum*. In April of 1884, he wrote to his fiancée, Martha Bernays, that he was particularly interested in trying it "in cases of cardiac ailments and nervous exhaustion, especially in the terrible condition that occurs in withdrawal from morphine." In July of 1884, Freud published an article entitled "Über Coca"—the first of three papers he wrote on the subject. The fact is, however, that Freud never worked with coca. Instead, he began to take pure cocaine

TO MY SON

In the car, bitterly yearning for a kind woman
I hadn't seen in years, I turned to the driver—
"I'm leaving, I'm leaving. Let me out, now!"
But first I asked where my son was,
and he jumped up from the floor, perched on top of my fist,
a white mouse I bent my lips to and kissed
and held against my cheek.
The car sped on. There was a feeling in this dream,
just before he appeared, of grief, and I
can't recall—something, something.
My wife was at the wheel. We battled. Rain.
Trees, blacktop, hillside seen through a blurred windshield.
A line I wrote in my sleep is lost, too,
its cold plain words—like these—worthless terms of meaning.
What happened before the scene in the rain-drenched car
is me straddling a woman in bed, biting
very very gently through sheer white silk
her nipples, then cut to the road, wife, mouse,
anguish. Whose voice or face keeps signalling,
crying out from a great distance in the mind,
from a life I know I should live? The sweet
poor beast that came when I needed my son . . .

—STEPHEN BERG

hydrochloride by mouth, in doses of at least a hundred milligrams, and found that it produced an exhilaration and euphoria that he liked very much. Hard-core defenders of the psychoanalytic faith try to find merit in Freud's cocaine papers, but they are some of his shoddiest writings, and at the end of his career he ordered them left out of his collected works. Baldomero Cáceres deplores Freud's reductionism, his constant equating of coca with cocaine—a confusion that is evident in both the title and the body of his first article and in his subsequent recommendation, on the basis of Bentley's work with oral tincture of coca, that a friend of his take injections of cocaine to treat his morphine habit. Baldo says, "This terrible mistake of Freud's was the origin of the scientific establishment's failure to distinguish coca from cocaine—an error that has had grave consequences for Andean civilization, Peru, and the world."

It also had grave consequences for Freud: he quickly became a habitual user of oral cocaine and an enthusiastic promoter of it. In "Über Coca" he denied the possibility of cocaine abuse. In a letter written in February, 1886, possibly under the influence of the drug, he told Martha that cocaine relieved his neurasthenia and gave him confidence in social situations. He also said that it made him feel he had the strength to sacrifice his life, as his ancestors had done in defending the Temple. Meanwhile, his friend, who was taking larger and larger doses of the prescribed remedy, had become a cocainist instead of a morphinist—perhaps the first such case in Europe—and had begun to experience toxic effects, including delirium and hallucinations of insects crawling beneath his skin. Freud grew increasingly alarmed about his friend's addiction but was unable to change his behavior or save him from a downward spiral of intoxication and depression, which led eventually to psychosis and an untimely death.

Ironically, by not seeing the significance of the most immediate effect of ingesting cocaine—its numbing of the mouth—Freud missed his first great chance at medical fame. In September of 1884, a colleague demonstrated that a cocaine solution dropped into the eye allowed painless removal of cataracts. This opened the era of local anesthesia—a revolutionary advance. Freud, meanwhile, continued to deny the abuse potential of cocaine when it was consumed habitually as a stimulant and euphoriant, even after increasingly frequent reports of cases similar to his friend's. But as the nineteenth century ended, it became obvious to all that cocaine was perfectly capable of claiming victims of its own, and the medical profession soon distanced itself from use of the drug except as a local anesthetic.

Thus the centuries-old European prejudice against South American Indians' chewing of coca leaves found scientific support in the medical profession's disastrous experience with purified cocaine. Baldomero Cáceres singles out the great German psychiatrist Emil Kraepelin as the man who codified prejudice and confusion into scientific theory. Kraepelin pioneered the classification of mental disorders in an 1883 work, and in the fourth edition of the text, published in 1891, he made an addition that makes Cáceres fume. Cáceres has written that Kraepelin added "cocainism" to a short list of "chronic intoxications," and that it is "in this context that we first see the 'chewing of coca leaves' turned into another 'chronic intoxication,' whose consequences 'in the homeland of coca, in Peru, are as well known as those of opium smokers in China.' " Baldo told me that "others took up the theme and embellished it over the next few decades—men who often had no direct experience of Andean culture and looked to German psychiatry as the source of truth. They ignored all the positive testimony about the health benefits of coca from Indians and those who lived with them. The only lens through which they viewed the indigenous culture was the lens of psychopathology. And then came Gutiérrez-Noriega."

CARLOS GUTIÉRREZ-NORIEGA, born in 1906, was the most famous brain researcher that Peru has produced. After receiving his medical degree, he did graduate work in pharmacology at several North American universities and then returned to Peru to become chief of pharmacology at the Institute of Hygiene, in Lima; he also founded the journal *Revista de Medicina Experimental* and became the president of the Sociedad de Neuro-Psiquiatría. Gutiérrez-Noriega was also the most influential foe of coca that South America has produced—a man whose writings turned the entire Andean Indian population into a nation enslaved by "cocaism."

During the nineteen-forties, Gutiérrez-Noriega conducted experimental studies of coca and cocaine in both animals and human beings; his human subjects were Indian *coqueros* who happened to be incarcerated in Lima's central prison or committed to asylums. His publications were warmly endorsed by the Peruvian government and were read by an international audience. In them he com-

"*Dusk was Victor Hugo's favorite part of the day, too.*"

piled a litany of pathological changes resulting from habitual use of coca. He always equated cocaism with misery and theorized that malnutrition was inextricably linked to the addiction—that Indians turned to coca as a substitute for food, then suffered loss of appetite as a result of their habit. Finally, he identified coca chewing as "the factor of greatest importance opposed to the improvement of the Indian's health and social condition." In the forties, Gutiérrez-Noriega enjoyed a reputation as the world's foremost expert on the effects of coca. His work was the summation of the European psychiatric view of Indian use of *Erythroxylum*.

For a contemporary assessment of that work, I went to Fernando Cabieses, whom many consider the most knowledgeable living Peruvian expert on the effects of coca and cocaine. His latest book on the subject—"La Coca: Dilema Trágico?"—offers a concise summary of what we do and do not know about both substances. Cabieses is a medical doctor who wears two very different professional hats. Considered the father of neurosurgery in Peru, he is the director of the Neurological Institute of Lima; at seventy, he still performs surgery most days. ("Aneurysms are my passion," he says.) He is also the president of the National Institute of Traditional Medicine, under the Ministry of Public Health, and in that capacity he is an enthusiastic researcher of medicinal plants, including coca, which, he maintains, is "the single most important natural remedy within our borders."

I asked if Gutiérrez-Noriega had known Andean culture, and Fernando replied, "His only experience of Indians was with the prisoners he used as subjects. He assumed they were in prison because of their 'cocaism.' He seldom had contact with normal Indians." Moreover, Gutiérrez-Noriega's experimental results were not particularly supportive of his theories, Fernando explained. "He tried very hard to produce an animal model for the cocaism that was the focus of his writing, but he never could. He worked with dogs, and, even using cocaine, he could get them addicted only by injection—never to cocaine by mouth, much less to coca."

Fernando then talked of his own interest in Andean Indian culture, saying, "The observation that got me into my present experimental work with coca is that some of the most impressive leaders of Quechua communities are also the most dedicated users of the leaf—charismatic men, who by any standards are healthy, intelligent, productive. I see no psychopathology there."

I asked if the Indians were right to insist that coca is not cocaine, and he replied pensively, "The amount of cocaine in leaves of average strength is small—about one-half of one per cent by weight, or less. The average *coquero* consumes about thirty grams of leaves a day, or a little more than an ounce. Thirty grams of coca would contain about a hundred and fifty milligrams of cocaine. Certainly *coqueros* absorb some of this—we can measure their blood levels of it after coca use—but there is a tremendous difference between a dose of a hundred or a hundred and fifty milligrams of powder cocaine swallowed, sniffed, or injected and that same dose taken over the course of a day in the traditional manner of Indians. The difference lies in the realm of pharmacokinetics."

Pharmacokinetics is the study of the distribution and fate of drugs within the organism: how they enter the body, move through it, interact with their target organs, and are finally eliminated. Pharmacologists now know that how a drug is administered and the rate of its increase of concentration in the blood and in the target organs are critical determinants of its effects—more critical than the size of the dose. Small doses of drugs introduced directly and rapidly into the blood and brain may produce much more dramatic (and toxic) effects than large doses introduced indirectly and slowly. Of the many ways that human beings have found to put cocaine into their brains, holding a quid of coca in the mouth is, pharmacokinetically, the safest, while inhaling the vapors of freebase or crack cocaine is the most dangerous.

"One possibility," Fernando continued, "is that two different systems of neurotransmitters are involved in the behavioral patterns we see around the habitual

"Well, pardon me for living!"

consumption of coca and cocaine. Low doses of cocaine, entering the brain slowly, may activate only the norepinephrine system, producing alertness and dissipating fatigue. Higher doses, taken in ways that cause rapid rises in concentration of the drug in blood and brain, may, in addition, activate the dopamine system, producing the intense, short-lived euphoria that cocaine users seek. Disturbances in that system may also underlie the paranoia and personality changes that occur with chronic abusive use of cocaine."

"So you're saying that coca and cocaine act like two different pharmacological agents."

"*Exactamente.*"

"Has it ever occurred to anyone that if we stopped wearing these damned skirts we wouldn't have to march off to defend our manhood every five minutes?"

Most of Gutiérrez-Noriega's ideas have been disproved by later investigators, most notably by scientific-minded anthropologists. For example, there has been a great deal of inquiry into the eating habits of Indians in relation to coca. Instead of replacing food with leaves, Indians use food and leaves together; their preference is to follow a good meal with a chew to improve digestion. Analyses of coca leaves also show them to contain significant amounts of some nutrients, including more iron and calcium than any of the food crops grown in the Andes, as well as B vitamins; regular consumption of the leaves may supplement the traditional Andean diet in important ways. One Peruvian scientist has told me that the low incidence of osteoporosis among Andean Indians is due, in part, to coca use, since the Andean diet is otherwise very low in calcium. Since the time of Gutiérrez-Noriega, anthropologists and ethnobotanists have compiled a large body of data supporting many of the Indians' claims of the utility of coca in their lives. Nonetheless, it is the psychiatric view of Andean coca use that has determined governmental policies in our time.

TWO years ago, Baldomero Cáceres and Fernando Cabieses teamed up to write a memorandum for ENACO explaining how it was that in 1947 Peru came to ask the United Nations to appoint a commission of inquiry to look at the effects of coca chewing. The work of Gutiérrez-Noriega was the immediate stimulus for this request, and the resulting inquiry led directly to international accords on suppression of coca. In 1949, a Commission of Enquiry on the Coca Leaf was formed, with an American businessman, Howard B. Fonda, as its chairman. Fonda had little or no knowledge of ethnobotany, pharmacokinetics, or Andean culture. He was an executive with the Burroughs Wellcome pharmaceutical company and a member of the American Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association. On arriving in Lima in September, 1949, he gave an interview to the leading newspaper, *El Comercio*, before beginning his work. In it he said:

> We believe that the daily, inveterate use of coca leaves, by chewing, . . . not only is absolutely noxious and therefore detrimental, but also is the cause of racial degeneration in many centers of population, and of the decadence that visibly shows in numerous Indians—and even in some *mestizos*—in certain zones of Peru and Bolivia. Our studies will confirm the certainty of our assertions, and we hope we can present a rational plan of action . . . to attain the absolute and sure abolition of this pernicious habit.

The Commission of Enquiry on the Coca Leaf used the term "cocaism" repeatedly, systematically ignored bibliographic references that even then spoke of coca's beneficial properties, and fully endorsed all the conclusions of Gutiérrez-Noriega. It delivered its final report to the United Nations in June, 1950. Two years later, the U.N. took the official position that coca chewing was a form of drug addiction. A decade later, it put coca on Schedule One, a list of the most dangerous and highly restricted substances, which appeared in an international treaty known as the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961. Almost all members of the U.N., including Peru and Bolivia, have signed the treaty. It prohibited international commerce in the leaves (except for shipments destined for flavoring Coca-Cola) and envisioned total eradication of coca in South America within twenty-five years. The United States drug-enforcement establishment lobbied enthusiastically for its passage.

Three decades later, many Peruvians and Bolivians bitterly regret that their countries are signatories to the accord, because they no longer subscribe to what they have to come see as a prejudicial European view of coca chewing and they want very much to be able to develop coca as a marketable resource. This change is recent. Through the nineteen-sixties and seventies, many attempts were made to limit coca production, encourage Indians to substitute other crops, and

"It's our way of saying, 'Thank you for shopping at Wilson's.'"

destroy coca fields with herbicides (usually supplied by Washington). The main effect of the burning and poisoning of coca fields has been to engender terrific resentment against the United States on the part of campesinos. Indians who have switched to other cash crops, whether coffee, soybeans, or peanuts, have invariably been wiped out financially. Some of these policies continue in effect, but their day is ending.

TODAY, in both Peru and Bolivia, the new politics of coca is evident. Fernando Cabieses sees three positions on the issue in his country. "The first is the old view of Gutiérrez-Noriega that was frozen into international policy," he told me. "Obviously, this position is going out of fashion today, both because we have much better scientific information about the leaf and because actions taken from it have been disastrous failures. The second position, and the one that is becoming very fashionable, is that of the defenders of coca, who see it as a good thing, a valuable natural resource that our country should develop through industrialization and aggressive marketing. I hold a third position. It is that coca is a potent symbol of a whole culture, equal to coffee and tobacco for North Americans. To eradicate it would be tantamount to committing cultural genocide. Its use within the indigenous culture is simply not a problem, since it produces more benefit than harm, but I do not defend its use outside that culture, and I am not in favor of turning coca into candies, wines, and toothpastes for the international market."

Fernando went on to explain why he does not endorse international expansion: "I'm concerned that if I defend the use of coca outside the indigenous culture, then I am also seen as defending the traffickers and the illegal trade in cocaine, and I don't want to do that. You know, there is now an organization of growers, and they say that two hundred thousand families depend on coca for their livelihood. They are always trying to involve me, but I don't want to get mixed up with it."

He was referring to a union of Andean coca growers that held its first meeting in March of 1991, in La Paz. One of the supporters of this movement is a forceful leftist economist, Hugo Cabieses (Fernando's nephew), who was one of the leaders of Fundación Andina, an organization that seeks to improve the social and economic conditions of Andean peoples, both Indians and mestizos, from Colombia to Chile. Hugo's involvement in the issue represents a significant shift, because the Latin-American left has traditionally opposed the use of drugs, whether in plant or chemical form, as counter-revolutionary. Fundación Andina has published detailed analyses of the economic benefits that it claims would accrue to the Andean region if coca should be fully legalized and marketed throughout the world, and Hugo has participated in conferences of legal experts who have concluded that legalizing coca products would siphon energy away from the illegal traffic in cocaine. Legalizing the export of coca products "could be our salvation," one Peruvian government official told me excitedly. He showed me a report on the spectacular worldwide sales of red ginseng from South Korea and told me he was sure that the sacred leaf of the Incas would offer stiff competition.

So far, the President of Peru, Alberto Fujimori, has made few public statements on the future of coca and given little indication of his feelings about the issue. Yet, despite the absence of guidance from the Presidential Palace, the Ministry of Public Health has authorized ENACO to study possible ways of developing a legal industry in coca products, and ENACO, with the help of Baldomero Cáceres and others, has tentatively begun producing videos, brochures, and books to help change public opinion. It is also planning to develop a high-quality standardized extract of coca that could be incorporated into commercial products, and there is a quiet movement of lawyers, businessmen, and coca experts who are making plans in the hope that exports will soon be allowed.

Bolivia is much less timid and has a stronger tradition of integrating its European and Indian cultures. In La Paz, coca is sold openly, as are a number of products made from it, including coca tea (the national beverage), syrups, jam, chewing gum, and toothpastes. Indian customs are more widely accepted by the general populace than they are in Peru. Many Bolivian students and intellectuals use coca, not just as tea but also as a chew. And Bolivia has never had a psychiatric establishment that was swayed by European ways of thinking about *coqueros*. In fact, Jaime Paz Zamora, the President of Bolivia from 1989 to 1993, contemplated setting up a center for investigating coca, including its therapeutic effects. On the basis of my reading of the scientific literature and of my own experiences with coca, I believe that the leaf should be studied for possible use as a remedy for stomach and intestinal problems, as a treatment for acute motion sickness, and as a rapid-acting depressant, among other uses. It may also be a useful treatment for drug addiction. A Bolivian psychiatrist has announced that he has cured people addicted to cocaine by weaning them off *pasta básica*, using preparations of coca that are less and less pharmacokinetically potent; a Peruvian researcher has reported similar success.

Paz Zamora was the chief architect of a "coca diplomacy" that has been widely reported in the international press, much to the annoyance of Washington. His campaign to change the way the world views coca began in April, 1992, when, for its cultural exposition at Expo '92 in Seville, Bolivia shipped coca leaves to Spain, intending to serve cups of the national beverage to visitors to its pavilion. But Spanish customs agents, complying with the provisions of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, impounded the shipment. A wave of national outrage swept through Bolivia, causing such a stir that Queen Sofia of Spain had to make an official visit to La Paz in May to apologize—and drink coca tea on Bolivian television. Following that incident, Paz Zamora started speaking out about the virtues of coca, insisting that people in other countries must learn to distinguish coca from cocaine. He even attended the 1992 meeting of the World Health Organization, in Geneva, to ask for investigations of the medicinal and nutritional uses of coca.

In June of 1993, in La Paz, I asked the President if he felt that he was making any headway, and he replied, "Little by little, we're making progress. But we are working to counteract years of prejudice and misinformation." Perhaps one of the most pressing issues for North Americans regarding coca diplomacy is whether or not it is possible to defend and promote coca without seeming to defend the illicit drug trade. Although Paz Zamora himself is now in disgrace—because of ties between members of his Administration and coca traffickers—he felt that that was no problem for the country. "We will continue to fight all illegal drug trafficking," he told me. "We recognize that there is excess production of coca, far above legitimate needs, and we will continue to try to reduce it in any way that we can. But we will also continue our efforts to educate the world about the great differences between coca and cocaine, about correct uses of the leaves, and about their potential as a unique resource. And we are committed to the legal industrialization and commercialization of coca products."

The new President of Bolivia, Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada, seemed for a time to continue the coca policy of his predecessor. At the beginning of last July, he met with President Fujimori, in the city of Ilo, Peru, to work out an accord on joint economic development. Point 19 of the Declaration of Ilo calls for the creation of a high-level binational commission, which, in the words of one newspaper, would "elaborate and carry out a joint strategy of reëvaluation of coca with the principal objective of removing this national resource from Schedule One of the Single Convention of 1961." Baldomero Cáceres points out, "We don't need any more data. . . . It's very clear that the present classification was made on the basis of distorted information." Even so, Hugo Cabieses is hoping to organize a major conference to gather scientific data that would support the removal of coca from Schedule One, since Washington still opposes any easing of restrictions on coca production or use, and it is highly unlikely that any change in the treaty will come about without American support. Indeed, President Sánchez de Lozada, under intense pressure from Washington to do something in the Chaparé region about ever-expanding production of coca, most of which is going to the black market, has halted Bolivia's coca diplomacy and provoked a noisy crisis with the campesinos, who say coca is their livelihood and see moves to prohibit its production as thinly disguised efforts to destroy their way of life.

In September, Sánchez de Lozada convened a national debate in La Paz on the problem of coca and cocaine, which was attended by representatives of industry, labor, the press, the armed forces, and the Church. The result was a ten-point accord that affirmed the government's strong position against the illegal traffic in cocaine and against excessive production of coca, and also noted the desirability of continuing the international campaign to decriminalize coca. The debate was upstaged by the arrival in La Paz of three thousand members of the Andean Council of Coca Producers, who had marched for three weeks, from the hot lowlands of the Chaparé to the high Andes, to pro-

"I'm not a machine, Deborah. I can't just turn my greed on and off."

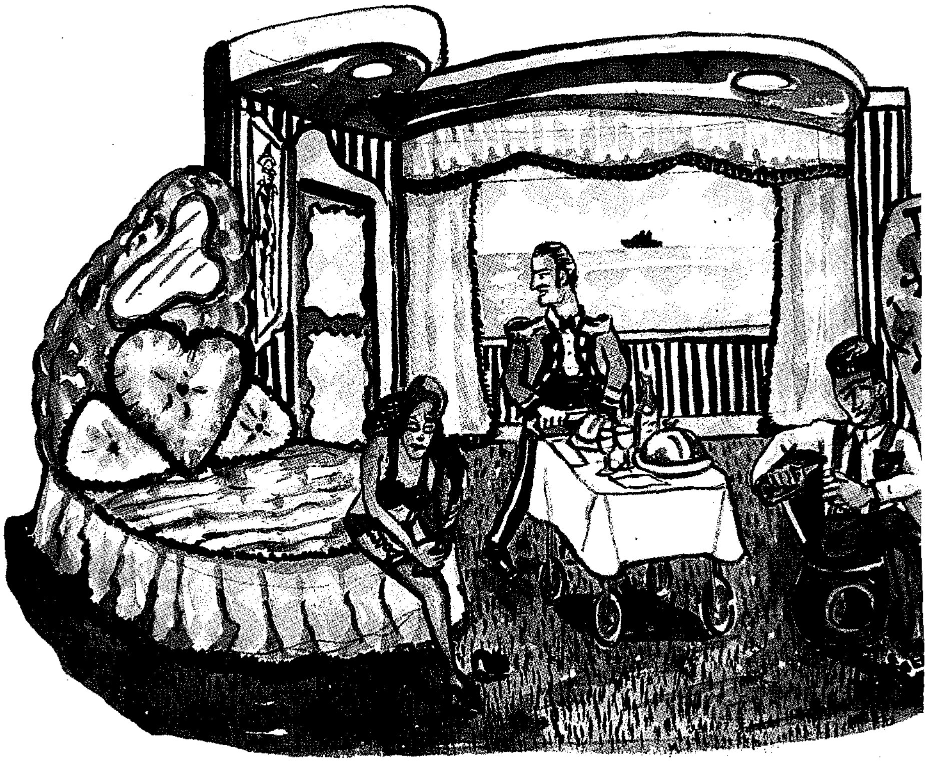
test any attempt to restrict their production of the sacred leaf.

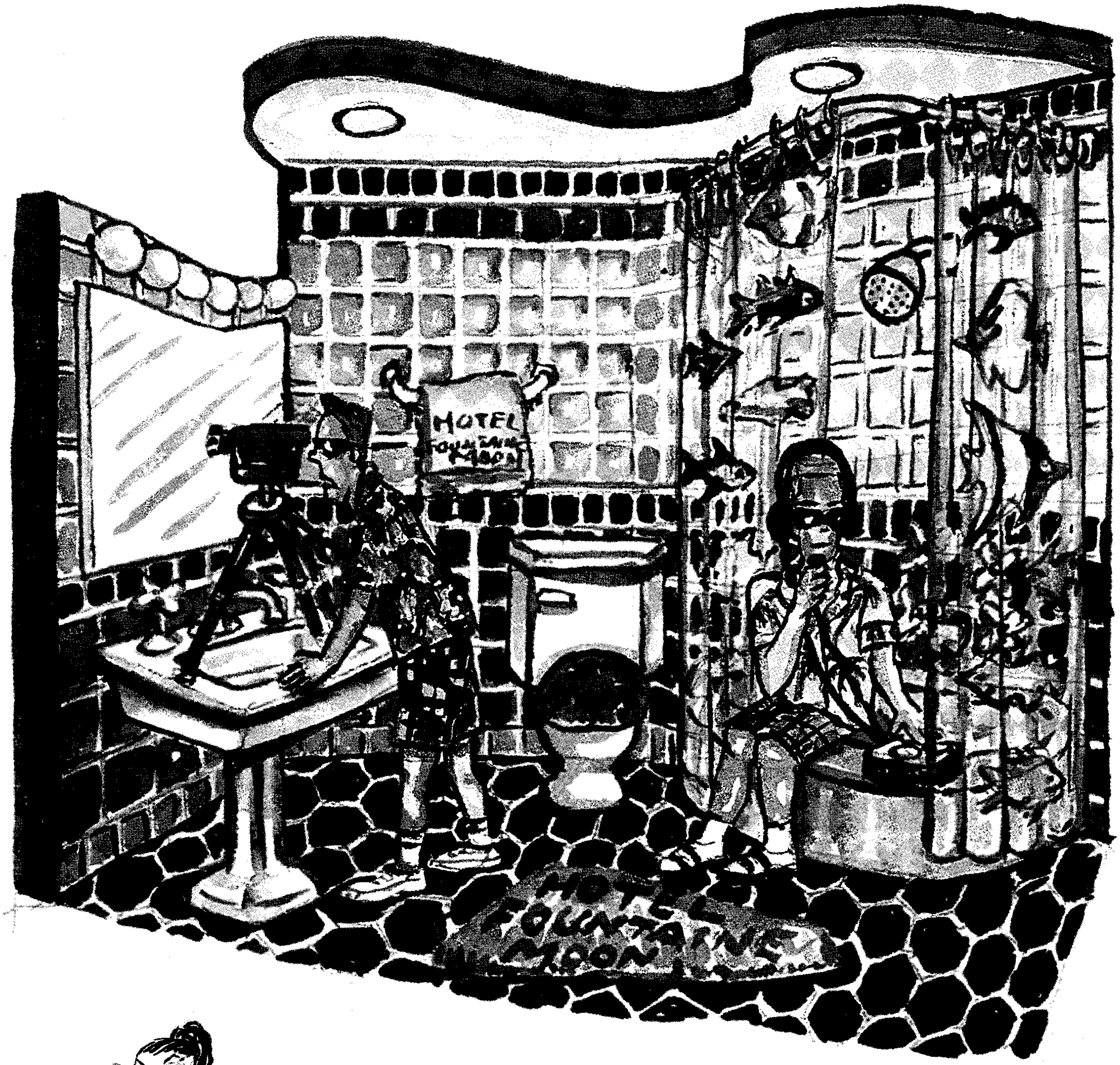
Although this position is supported by many Bolivians, Sánchez de Lozada, in a television interview in November, startled the nation by announcing a policy of zero tolerance (Opción Cero) toward coca growers in the Chaparé. "Nobody chews coca in the Chaparé, and pretty much all it is used for is to make cocaine," he said. An outcry from the growers association forced him to clarify his position as meaning zero tolerance toward cocaine, but this did little to appease his opponents, who saw him as kowtowing to Washington and the Drug Enforcement Administration. Since then, Sánchez de Lozada has taken an increasingly hard line on coca and the growers union.

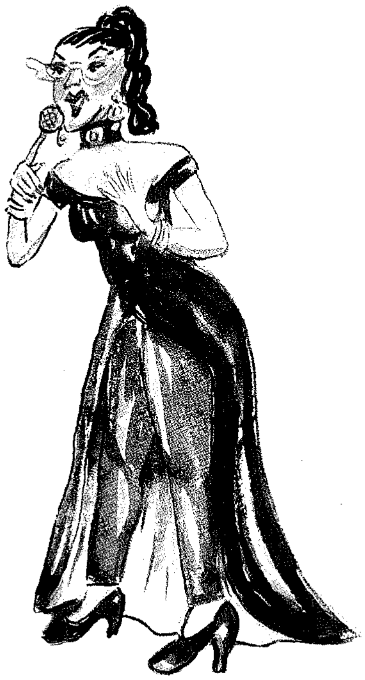
Meanwhile, Peru is strangely quiet. With the Presidential elections, in which Fujimori was reëlected, just over, it is understandable that he would want to avoid the kind of embroilment that his Bolivian counterpart is immersed in, but people like Baldomero Cáceres and Hugo Cabieses are disappointed that not a single candidate raised the coca issue as a campaign theme. They are happy that their government has not attempted anything as regressive as Opción Cero, but at the same time they envy Bolivia its national consciousness of coca and coca politics.

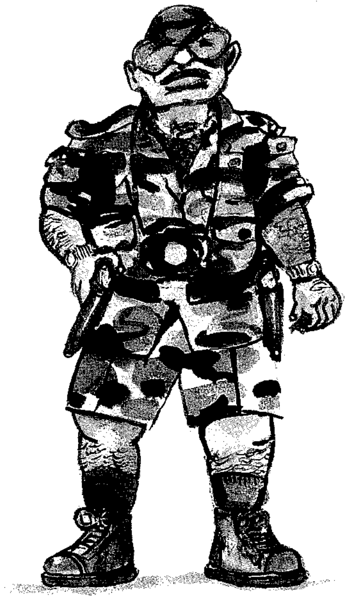
The Bolivian government, however, is moving further and further away from coca diplomacy. In mid-April, a meeting of the Andean Council was held at Copacabana, on the Bolivian side of Lake Titicaca. The Bolivian Navy raided it, jailed the council's leader, and expelled Hugo Cabieses from Bolivia. The Sánchez de Lozada government declared martial law in response to labor agitation throughout the country, and is denying that it has singled out the growers union for special treatment.

Bolivia does not seem big enough or Peru brave enough to defy Washington; nor is there reason to think that the United Nations will react favorably to increasing pressure from citizens of those countries to liberate coca from the present strict controls. I cannot predict what might happen next. What is clear is that our civilization's failure to understand the sacred leaf of South American Indians, how to respect it and use it wisely, has cost us dearly. ♦









SKETCHBOOK · BY RED GROOMS

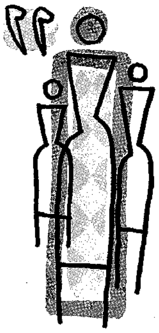
MOONGLOW

JOHN GUARE'S new farce, "Moon Under Miami," which just opened at the Organic, in Chicago, in a Remains Theatre production, plunges headlong into the present-day world of South Florida riffraff, but it also echoes a time—the early eighties—when the Abscam scandal and tales of money laundering dominated the headlines. To evoke this world of drugs, political chicanery, and generally garish goings on, Red Grooms came up with a series of bold production designs, several of which are reproduced here.
—BRENDAN LEMON

FICTION

HIS WOMEN

BY ALICE ADAMS



“I THINK we should try it again. You move back in,” says Meredith, in her lovely, low, dishonest Southern voice.

Carter asks, “But—Adam?”

“I’m not seeing him anymore.” Her large face, not pretty but memorable, braves his look of disbelief. Her big, deep-brown eyes are set just too close, her shapely mouth is a little too full, and greedy. Big, tall, dark, sexy Meredith, who is still by law his wife. She adds, “I do see him around the campus, I mean, but we’re just friends now.”

That’s what you said before, Carter does not say, but that unspoken sentence hangs there in the empty space between them. She knows it as well as he does.

They are sitting in the garden behind her house—their house, actually, joint ownership being one of their central problems, as Carter sees it. In any case, now in early summer, in Chapel Hill, the garden is lovely. The roses over which Carter has labored in seasons past—pruning, spraying, and carefully, scientifically feeding—are in fragrant, delicately full bloom: great bursts of red and flame, yellow and pink and white. The beds are untidy now, neglected. Adam, who never actually moved in (Carter thinks), is not a gardener, and Meredith has grown careless.

She says, with a pretty laugh, “We’re not getting younger. Isn’t it time we did something mature, like making our marriage work?”

“Since we can’t afford a divorce.” He, too, laughs, but since what he says is true, no joke, it falls flat.

And Meredith chooses to ignore it; they are not to talk about money, not this time. “You know I’ve always loved you,” she says, her eyes larger and a warmer brown than ever.

Perhaps in a way she has, thinks Carter. Meredith loves everyone; it is a part of her charm. Why not him, too? Carter and Adam and all her many friends and students (Meredith teaches in the music department at the university), and most cats and dogs and birds.

She adds, almost whispering, sexily, “And I think you love me, too. We belong together.”

“I’ll have to think about it,” Carter tells her, somewhat stiffly.

The brown eyes narrow, just a little. “How about Chase? You still see her?”

“Well, sort of.” He does not say “as friends,” since this is not true, though Carter has understood that the presence of Chase in his life has raised his stature—his value, so to speak—and he wishes he could say that they are still “close.”

But four years of military school, at The Citadel, left Carter a stickler for the literal truth, along with giving him his ramrod posture and a few other unhelpful hangups—according to the shrink he drives over to Durham to see, twice a week. Dr. Chen, a diminutive Chinese of mandarin manners and a posture almost as stiff in its way as Carter’s own. (“Oh, great” was Chase’s comment on hearing this description. “You must think you’re back in some Oriental Citadel.”) In any case, he is unable to lie now to Meredith, who says, with a small and satisfied laugh, “So we’re both free. It’s fated, you see?”

A LONG time ago, before Meredith and long before Chase, Carter was married to Isabel, who was small and fair and thin and rich, truly beautiful and chronically unfaithful. In those days, Carter was a graduate student at the university, in business administration, which these days he teaches. They lived, back then, he and Isabel, in a fairly modest rented house out on Franklin Street, somewhat crowded with Isabel’s valuable inherited antiques; the effect was grander than that of any other graduate students’, or even young professors’, homes. As Isabel was grander, more elegant than other wives, in her big hats and long skirts and very high heels, with her fancy hors d’oeuvres and her collection of forties big-band tapes, to which she loved to dance. After dinner, at parties at their house, as others cleared off the table, Isabel would turn up the music and lower the lights in the living room. “Come *on*,” she would say. “Let’s all *dance*.”

Sometimes there were arguments later: “I feel rather foolish saying this, but I don’t exactly like the way you dance with Walter.”

“Whatever do you mean? Walter’s a marvellous dancer.” But she laughed unpleasantly, her wide, thin, dark-red mouth showing small, perfect teeth; she knew exactly what he meant.

What do you do if your wife persists in dancing *like that* in your presence? And if she even tells you, on a Sunday, that she thinks she will drive to the beach with Sam, since you have so many papers to grade?

She promises they won’t be late, and kisses Carter goodbye very tenderly. But they are late, very late. Lovely Isabel, who comes into the house by herself and is not only late but a little drunk, as Carter himself is by then, having had considerable bourbon for dinner, with some peanuts for nourishment.

Nothing that he learned at The Citadel had prepared Carter for any of this.

Standing in the doorway, Isabel thrust her body into a dancer’s pose, one thin hip pushed forward and her chin, too, stuck out—a sort of mime of defiance. She said, “Well, what can I say? I know I’m late, and we drank too much.”

“Obviously.”

“But so have you, from the look of things.”

“I guess.”

“Well, let’s have another drink together. What the hell. We always have fun drinking, don’t we, darling Carter?”

“I guess.”

It was true. Often, drinking, they had hours of long, wonderful, excited conversations, impossible to recall the following day. As was the case this time, the night of Isabel’s Sunday at the beach with Sam.

Drinking was what they did best together; making love was not. This was something that they never discussed, al-

ANDERS WENNGREN

though back then, in the early seventies, people did talk about it quite a lot, and many people seemed to do it all the time. But part of their problem, sexually, had to do with drink itself, not surprisingly. A few belts of bourbon or a couple of Sunday-lunch Martinis made Isabel aggressively amorous, full of tricks and wiles and somewhat startling perverse persuasions. But Carter, although his mind was aroused and his imagination inflamed, often found himself incapacitated. Out of it, turned off. This did not always happen, but it happened far too often.

Sometimes, though, there were long, luxurious Sunday couplings, perhaps with some breakfast champagne or some dope; Isabel was extremely fond of an early-morning joint. Then it could be as great as any of Carter's boyhood imaginings of sex.

But much more often, as Isabel made all the passionate gestures in her considerable repertoire, Carter would have to murmur, "Sorry, dear," to her ear. Nuzzling, kissing her neck. "Sorry I'm such a poop."

And so it went the night she came home from Sam, from the beach. They had some drinks, and they talked. "Sam's actually kind of a jerk," said Isabel. "And you know, we didn't actually do anything. So let's go to bed. Come, kiss me and say I'm forgiven, show me I'm forgiven." But he couldn't show her, and at last it was she who had to forgive.

Another, somewhat lesser problem was that Isabel really did not like it in Chapel Hill. "It's awfully pretty," she admitted, "and we do get an occasional good concert, or even an art show. But, otherwise, what a terrifically overrated town! And the faculty wives, now really. I miss my friends."

Therefore Carter was pleased, he was very pleased, when Isabel began to speak with some warmth of this new friend, Meredith. "She's big and fat, in fact she's built like a cow, and she's very Southern, but she has a pretty voice and she works in the music department, she teaches there, and she seems to have a sense of humor. You won't mind if I ask her over?"

Meeting Meredith, and gradually spending some time with her, Carter at first thought she was a good scout, like someone's sister. Like many big women (Isabel's description had been unkind), she had a pleasant disposition and lovely skin. Nice long brown hair, and her eyes, if just too closely placed, were the clear, warm brown of Southern brooks. With Carter, her new friend's husband, she was flirty, in a friendly, pleasant way—the way of Southern women, a way he was used to. She was like his mother's friends, and his cousins, and the nice girls from Ashley Hall whom he used to take to dances at The Citadel.

Meredith became the family friend. She was often invited to dinner parties, or sometimes just for supper by herself. She and Isabel always seemed to have a lot to talk about. Concerts in New York, composers and musicians, not to mention a lot of local gossip.

When they were alone, Carter gathered, they talked about Meredith's boyfriends, of which she seemed to have a large and steady supply. "She's this certain type of Southern belle" was Isabel's opinion. "Not threateningly attractive, but sexy and basically comfy. She makes men feel good, with those big, adoring cow eyes."

Did Isabel confide in Meredith? Carter suspected that she did, and later he found out for certain, from Meredith, that she had. About her own affairs. Her boyfriends.

ALTHOUGH he had every reason to know that she was unhappy, Carter was devastated by Isabel's departure. Against all reason, miserably, he felt that his life was demolished. Irrationally, instead of remembering a bitter, complaining Isabel ("I can't stand this tacky town a minute longer") or an Isabel with whom things did not work out well in bed ("Well, Jesus Christ, is that what you learned at The Citadel?"), he recalled only her beauty. Her clothes, and her scents. Her long blond hair.

He was quite surprised, at first, when Meredith began to call a lot with messages of sympathy, when she seemed to take his side. "You poor guy, you certainly didn't deserve this" was one of the things that she said at the time. Told that he was finding it hard to eat—"I don't know, everything I try tastes awful"—she began to arrive every day or so, at mealtimes, with delicately flavored chicken, and oven-fresh Sally Lunn, tomatoes from her garden, and cookies, lots and lots of homemade cookies. Then she took to inviting him to her house for dinner—often.

As he left her house, at night, Carter would always kiss Meredith, in a friendly way, but somehow, imperceptibly, the kisses and their accompanying embraces became more prolonged. Also, Carter found that this good-night moment was something he looked forward to. Until the night when Meredith whispered to him, "You really don't have to go home, you know. You could stay with me." More kissing, and then, "Please stay. I want you, my darling Carter."

Sex with Meredith was sweet and pleasant and friendly, and if it lacked the wild rush that he had sometimes felt with Isabel, at least when he failed her she was nice about it. Sweet and comforting. Unlike angry Isabel.

THEY married as soon as his divorce was final, and together they bought the bargain house, on a hill outside town, and they set about remodelling: shingling, making a garden, making a kitchen and a bedroom with wonderful views. Carter, like everyone else in the high-flying eighties, had made some money on the market, and he put all this into the house. The house became very beautiful; they loved it, and in that house Carter and Meredith thrived. Or so he thought.

He thought so until the day she came to him in anguished tears and told him, "This terrible thing. I've fallen in love with Adam." Adam, a lean young musician, a cellist, who had been to the house for dinner a couple of times. Unprepossessing, Carter would have said of him.

Carter felt, at first, a virile rage. Bloodily murderous fantasies obsessed his waking hours; at night he could barely sleep. He was almost unrecognizable to himself, this furiously, righteously impassioned man. With Meredith he was icily, enragedly cold. And then, one day, Meredith came to him and with more tears she told him, "It's over, I'll never see him again. Or if I do we'll just be friends."

After that followed a brief and intense and, to Carter, slightly unreal period of, well, fucking: the fury with which they went at each other could not be called "making love." Meredith was the first to taper off; she responded less and less actively, although as always she was pleasant, nice. But Carter finally asked her what was wrong, and she admitted, through more tears, "It's Adam. I'm seeing him again. I mean, we're in love again."

This time, Carter reacted not with rage but with a sort of defeated grief. He felt terribly old and battered. *Cuckold.* The ugly, old-fashioned word resounded, echoing through his brain. He thought, I am the sort of man to whom women are unfaithful.

When he moved out, away from Meredith and into an apartment, and Chase Landau fell in love with him (quite rapidly, it seemed), Carter assumed that she must be crazy. It even seemed a little nuts for her to ask him for dinner soon after they met, introducing themselves in the elevator. Chase lived in his building, but her apartment, which contained her studio, was about twice the size of Carter's and much nicer, with balconies and views. "I liked your face," she later explained. "I always go for those narrow, cold, mean eyes." Laughing, making it a joke.

Chase was a tall, thin, red-haired woman, not Southern but from New York, and somewhat abrasive in manner. A painter of considerable talent and reputation (no wonder Meredith was impressed). Carter himself was impressed at finding inquiries from *Who's Who* lying around, especially because she never mentioned it. In his field, only the really major players made it.

Her paintings were huge, dark, and violent abstractions, incomprehensible. Discomforting. How could anyone buy these things and live with them? As they sat having drinks that first night, working at light conversation, Carter felt the paintings as enormous, hostile presences.

Chase was almost as tall as Carter was, close to six feet, and thin, but heavy-breasted, which may have accounted for her bad posture; she tended to slouch, and later she admitted, "When I was very young I didn't like my body at all. So conspicuous." Carter liked her body, very much. Her eyes were intense and serious, always.

As they were finishing dinner she said to him, "Your shoulders are wonderful. I mean the angle of them. This," and she reached with strong hands to show him.

He found himself aroused by that touch, wanting to turn and grasp her. To kiss. But not doing so. Later on, he did kiss her good night, but very chastely.

Used to living with women, with Isabel, and then with Meredith, Carter began to wonder what to do by himself at night. He had never been much of a reader, and most television bored him. In the small town that Chapel Hill still was in many ways, you would think (Carter thought) that people knowing of the separation would call and ask him over, but so far no one had. He wished he had more friends; he should have been warmer, kinder. Closer to people. He felt very old, and alone. (He wondered, *Are* my eyes mean? Am *I* mean?)

He called Chase and asked her out to dinner. "I know it's terribly short notice, but are you busy tonight?"

"No, in fact I'd love to go out tonight. I'm glad you called."

His heart leaped up at those mild words.

During that dinner, Chase talked quite a lot about the art world: her New York gallery, the one in L.A., the local art department. He listened, grateful for the entertainment she provided, but he really wasn't paying much attention. He was thinking of later on: Would she, possibly, so soon—

She would not. At the door, she bid him a clear good night, after a rather perfunctory social kiss. She thanked him for the dinner. She had talked too much, she feared; she tended to do that with new people, she told him, with a small, not quite apologetic, laugh.

FROM a friend in the law school, Carter got the name of a lawyer, a woman, with whom he spent an uncomfortable, discouraging, and expensive half hour. What it came to was that, in order to recover his share in the house, Carter would have to force Meredith to sell it, unless she could buy him out. None of this was final, of course; it was just the lawyer's temporary take on things. Still, it was deeply depressing to Carter.

Coming home, in the downstairs lobby of his building he ran into Chase, who was carrying a sack of groceries, which of course he offered to take.

"Only if you'll come and have supper with me." She flashed him a challenging smile. "I must have been thinking of you. I know I bought too much."

That night it was he who talked a lot. She only interrupted from time to time with small but sharp-edged questions. "If you didn't want to go to The Citadel, why didn't you speak up?" And "Do you think you trusted Meredith at first because she's not as good-looking as Isabel?" The sort of questions that he usually hated—that he hated from Dr. Chen—but not so with Chase; her dark, intelligent eyes were kind and alert. He felt safe with her, and appreciated. He almost forgot his wish to make love to her.

But then he remembered, and all that desire returned. He told her, "It's all I can do not to touch you. You're most terrifically attractive to me."

By way of answer, she smiled and leaned to meet him in a kiss. For a long time, then, like adolescents, they sat there kissing on her sofa, until she whispered, "Come on, let's go to bed. This is silly."

Carter had not expected their progress to be quite so rapid. He hardly knew her, did he really want this? But not long after that, they were indeed in bed, both naked. He caressed her soft, heavy breasts.

Pausing, sitting up to reach somewhere, Chase said, "You'll have to wear this. I'm sorry."

"Oh, Lord, I haven't done that since I was twenty. And look, I'm safe. I never played around."

"I know, but Meredith did. A lot."

"I don't think I can—"

"Here, I'll help you."

"Damn, I'm losing it, I knew I would."

Strictly speaking, technically, that night was not a great success. Still, literally they had gone to bed together, and Carter's feeling was that this was not a woman who fell into bed very easily (unlike—he had to think this—either Isabel or Meredith).

THE next day he had another appointment with the lawyer, who had talked with Meredith's lawyer, who had said that things looked worse.

"I don't know why I'm so drawn to you," Chase told him, "but I really am." She laughed. "That's probably not a good sign. For you, I mean. The men I've really liked best were close to certifiable. But you're not crazy, are you?"

"Not so far as I know."

Chase did not seem crazy to him. She was hardworking, very intelligent. Her two sons, with whom she got along well, were off in school, and she was surrounded by warm and admiring friends; her phone rang all the time with invitations, friendly voices. But, as Carter put it to himself, she did sometimes seem a little much. A little more than he had bargained for. Or more than he was up to right now.

Their sexual life, despite her continued insistence on—hated phrase—"safe sex," was sometimes great, then not. Chase complained, though nicely, only that out of bed he was not affectionate. "I could use more plain, unsexy touching," she said, and he tried to comply, though demonstrativeness was not at all in his nature.

Carter's broker called with bad news, quite a lot of bad news. Carter, like most people in the market, had taken a beating.

Even Chase would admit that her work habits were a little strange. She liked to get up late and to spend a couple of hours drinking coffee, phoning, maybe writing a letter or two. She would then go into her studio (a room to which Carter was never admitted). At times she would emerge to eat a piece of fruit, heat some soup, or, less frequently, go out for a short walk along the gravelled paths of old Chapel Hill. Back in her studio, immersed in her work, quite often she would forget about dinner until ten at night, or eleven; she did not forget dinner dates but she sometimes phoned to break or to postpone them.

Carter argued. "But if you started earlier in the morning you could finish—"

"I know. I know it's impractical, but it's the way I seem to have to work. I'm sorry. It's not something I can change."

Along with feeling some annoyance, Carter was moved and a little alarmed by her intensity, her high purpose.

Sometimes, in bed, Chase cried out quick, impassioned words of love to him—which Carter did not answer in kind, nor did he take what she said at those moments too seriously. In fact, as he was later forced to recognize, he gave rather little thought to Chase's deeper feelings. "You didn't want to deal with what I felt," she accused him, and he had to admit that that was entirely correct.

"Adam and I aren't getting along at all," said Meredith to Carter, over the phone. "I don't know—he's a lot more neurotic than I thought he was."

"Oh, that's too bad" was Carter's response. Not saying, *Now* you find this out, after wrecking our marriage and costing God knows what in lawyers' bills.

"He's very dependent," Meredith said. "I don't really like that. I guess I was spoiled by you."

"I don't know why she's telling me this stuff," Carter said to Chase when she called; the old instinct of compulsive honesty had forced him to repeat the conversation with Meredith.

"I think she wants you back," Chase told him when he phoned. "You wait and see."

"You think so? Really?"

"Jesus, Carter, you sound sort of pleased. If she did, would you even consider it?"

"Well, I don't know." As always, the literal truth: he did not know.

"God, Carter, she slept with everyone. Everyone in town knows that. Why do you think I insisted on safe sex?"

She was furiously excited, almost hysterical, Carter thought. She was out of control. A little frightening—but he only said, "Oh, come on, now."

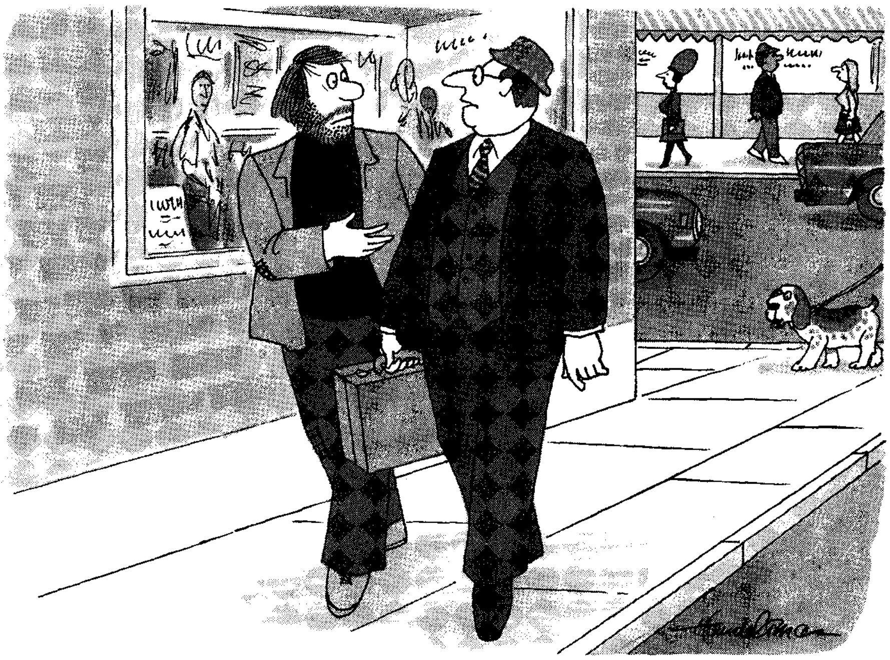
"How tacky can you get!" Chase cried out. And then she said, "Look, don't call me, I'll call you, O.K.?" And hung up.

True to her word, she did call him—once, very late at night. "I've had some wine," she said. "I shouldn't be calling, I mean, otherwise I wouldn't. But I just wanted you to know a couple of things. One, I was really in love with you. God, if I needed further proof that I'm seriously deranged. I always fall in love with the most unavailable man anywhere around. Emotionally. Mean eyes, good shoulders. *Shit*, why did I call? Good night!" And she hung up, loud and clear. A ridiculous and quite unnecessary conversation, in Carter's view.

Now, in the afternoon sunshine, Carter looks about at all the roses, and the scented white wisteria—at their lovely house and at unlovely, untrustworthy, but deeply familiar Meredith. He finds that, despite himself, he is thinking of Chase. Of her passion (those cries of love) and her scornful rage and of her final avowals (but she was drunk). Is it now too late? Suppose he went to her and said that he was through with Meredith, would she take him back? Would she ask him to come and live with her? (So far, she has never suggested such a thing.) Could they marry?

No is the answer that Carter gives to all these questions. No, Chase would probably not take him back, and no, there is no way he could afford to marry her. Even if he were sure that he wanted to. Chase is crazy—she must be crazy. Look at those paintings. There in the warm sunlight he suddenly shivers, as though haunted.

"Yes," he says to Meredith, although she hasn't spoken for a while. "Yes, O.K. All right." ♦



"No, but I can give you an unfunded mandate."

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BOOKS

POMP AND CIRCUMSTANCES

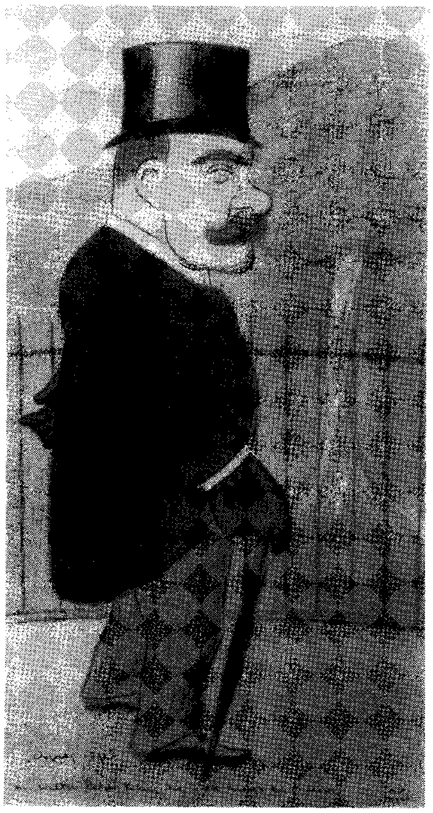
The curious case of Wilde's meek mentor.

BY PETER ACKROYD

He had the appearance of a pork butcher and the manners of an anchorite. He tried never to look anyone in the face, and spoke only upon subjects that did not interest him. If Walter Pater had not existed (and some of his contemporaries were undecided on the point), then Oscar Wilde would have had to invent him. In fact, it might be said that Wilde did invent him—or, at least, completed the process, by claiming Pater as the spiritual progenitor of what became known as Aestheticism: art for art's sake; art aspiring to the condition of music; art, even, as sin. Wilde, from his prison cell, described Pater's "Studies in the History of the Renaissance" as the book "which has had such a strange influence over my life." Denis Donoghue, in his critical biography "Walter Pater: Lover of Strange Souls" (Knopf; $27.50), similarly claims that Pater "set modern literature upon its . . . course" and, as a result, "is audible in virtually every attentive modern writer." But to most of Pater's peers he was a somewhat overrefined Oxford tutor who lived with his cat and was cared for by his two sisters. Such were his reserve and his diffidence that for Henry James he was "the mask without the face." He is, then, an interesting case.

Pater was born in 1839, in the riverside district of London's East End known as Shadwell. His father, a doctor who treated the poor, died when Walter was two, his mother when he was fourteen; it sometimes seems that half his family died during his childhood, so that by the time he reached the age of proper schooling he was possessed by a sense of fate as colorful as what he once called "Othello's strawberry handkerchief." But Pater displaced his suffering in ritual: he had an instinctive taste for what was then known as Decorative Gothic. He fashioned flowers out of sealing wax and had a passion for anything white. He was, according to one of his more feline biographers, "fond of organising little processional pomps"—a phrase that might also be used as a description of his writing.

He was educated at King's School, Canterbury, where he wrote a poem suggestively entitled "The Chant of the Celestial Sailors"—one that was revealing, but not in the expected way. A small footnote in a privately printed volume states that the poem "describes rather his waning ideas of heavenly progress." His heavenly ideas waned very quickly indeed, and by the time he arrived at Oxford as an undergraduate he had no more faith in Christianity than in Ovid's Metamorphoses. At university, he had the misfortune to be considered ugly but intriguing. He was described as "the Caliban of letters" or, more esoterically, as a woodcut from Charles Lamb's "Satan in Search of a Wife, by an Eye-Witness." A wife was the last thing Pater wanted, however, and he searched instead for academic preferment. He never succeeded in becoming a clerical fellow, for obvious reasons, but he was eventually given a classical fellowship at Brasenose College, Oxford.

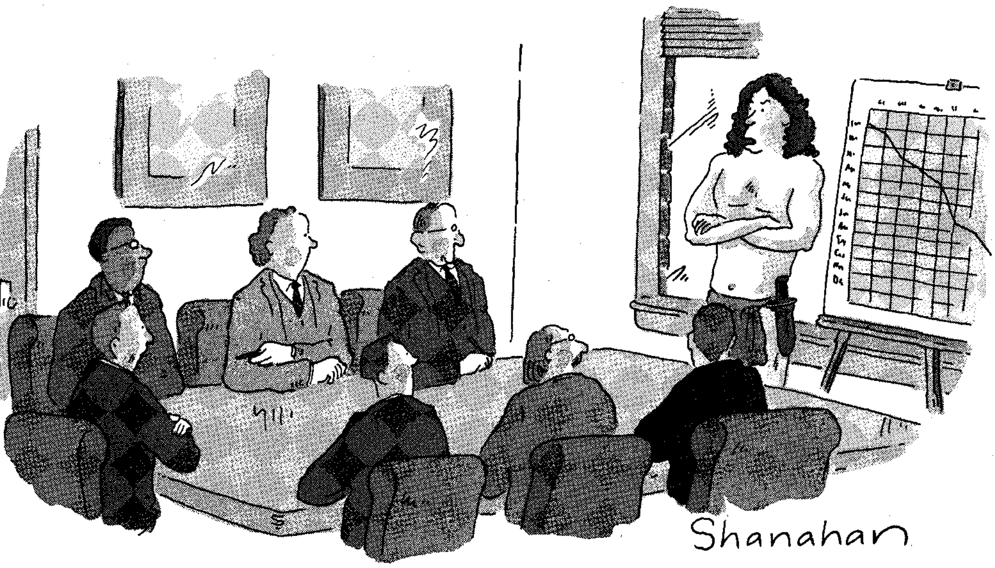


Walter Pater in a 1926 illustration by Max Beerbohm.

COURTESY PHILLIPS, LONDON

Brasenose had a reputation for "hearties"—athletic young men with more profile than prose style—and nothing could have suited Pater better. The poet A. C. Benson, who shared his tastes, put it nicely: "That a man should be ardently disposed to athletic pursuits was no obstacle to Pater's friendship, though he was himself entirely averse to games; it rather constituted an additional reason for admiring one with whom he felt otherwise in sympathy." Pater disliked ugliness of any kind and even admitted, "I would give ten years of my life to be handsome." He took defensive action and grew a mustache, which only made matters worse. He confessed that he could read Poe only in Baudelaire's translations, because "he is so rough," and, according to his first biographer, Thomas Wright, "even Goethe did not pass butchers' shops more rapidly."

At Brasenose, Pater lectured on philosophy, usually without mentioning any particular philosopher, and his private quarters contained little beyond a bust of Hercules (which he termed a "coquetry") and a bowl of dried rose leaves. He was, a contemporary observed, "one of the first of Oxford dons to bring a carefully studied taste to the arrangement and decoration of his rooms." He was to inhabit them for the next thirty years, but it cannot be said that his university life was an unmitigated success: he never received any other lectureship or professorship, and was relegated largely to the company and comfort of undergraduates. "Well," he would say to them when they brought him essays, "let us see what this is all about." But what, they must have wondered, is Mr. Pater all about? He had a high receding forehead and eyes bright but perhaps a little too close together; his mustache looked as if it had been chopped with a pair of pruning shears. He wore a frock coat very correctly, but he sported an apple-



"One word, gentlemen—'Ungowa!' "

green tie, which in some eyes, at least, was equivalent to wearing a dress.

• •

PATER'S predilections, however, were fully revealed only in his prose. In his first published essay, on the subject of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, he fretted over that poet's "excess of seriousness"—this in 1865, the year that Matthew Arnold's "Essays in Criticism" extolled the virtues of a high moral ground. Pater had attended Arnold's lectures as an undergraduate, and amid all that sweetness and light one can imagine him whispering, "Life should mean less than this." His second essay was a celebration of Johann Joachim Winckelmann, the eighteenth-century German scholar who had pursued Hellenism in more than a scholarly sense. Pater adverted, rather coyly, to Winckelmann's "romantic, fervid friendships with young men," which "perfected his reconciliation with the spirit of Greek sculpture." The essay was unsigned, according to the custom of the *Westminster Review,* where it appeared, in 1867, and so Pater escaped the opprobrium of those who might see his own aesthetics in an equally florid light. The following year, he wrote an essay on the poetry of William Morris in which, searching for a conclusion, he composed a sentence that will last as long as the English language itself: "To burn always with this hard, gem-like flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life." Again, he had written anonymously. His particular flame was meant to burn unseen.

But then he made a decision that marked, as he said of the title character in "Marius the Epicurean," his only finished novel, "the discovery of his possession of 'nerve.' " The essay on Winckelmann and the conclusion to his essay on Morris were revised in 1873 as a final note to "Studies in the History of the Renaissance," a volume that touches upon the strange life of Pico della Mirandola and the delicate works of Joachim du Bellay, among others, to define what Pater called "the powers and forces of pleasurable sensations." Here Pater stood revealed. There was no one passage or perception that could have been used in evidence against him, but the generally perfumed atmosphere of the book left his more stolid contemporaries uneasy. The style is overwrought, wanton, and ethereal. Pater dissolves in raptures over images of male beauty, whether they are constricted in "dainty, tight-laced armour" or covered in chains "like scalding water on their proud and delicate flesh!" And in one of the most famous passages in all art criticism, on the "Mona Lisa," declaring her to be "older than the rocks among which she sits," Pater conjures up vampires, Leda, and St. Anne. This was hardly the classical or Renaissance culture to which the Victorians wished to become accustomed. Rather, it was a world of pagan reveries, where the cult of the beautiful and the worship of physical perfection represented the true pieties. Pater talked of "sensations," of "pleasure," of "ecstasy." There were times when he even mentioned "suffering." It was all too much.

You should go to "Studies in the History of the Renaissance," in other words, not to learn anything about the Renaissance but only to understand Walter Pater. He once explained to Wilde that the art of prose was more difficult than that of poetry, and, in fact, the chapters of "The Renaissance" are not so much essays as prose poems. He composed them very slowly, on sheets of ruled paper, leaving spaces between the lines, to be eventually filled in with words; he was always searching for that perfect sentence which would mean everything or nothing. The book is part scholarship and part fiction, part biography and part criticism—what he called, in one of his more medieval moments, a "cantefable."

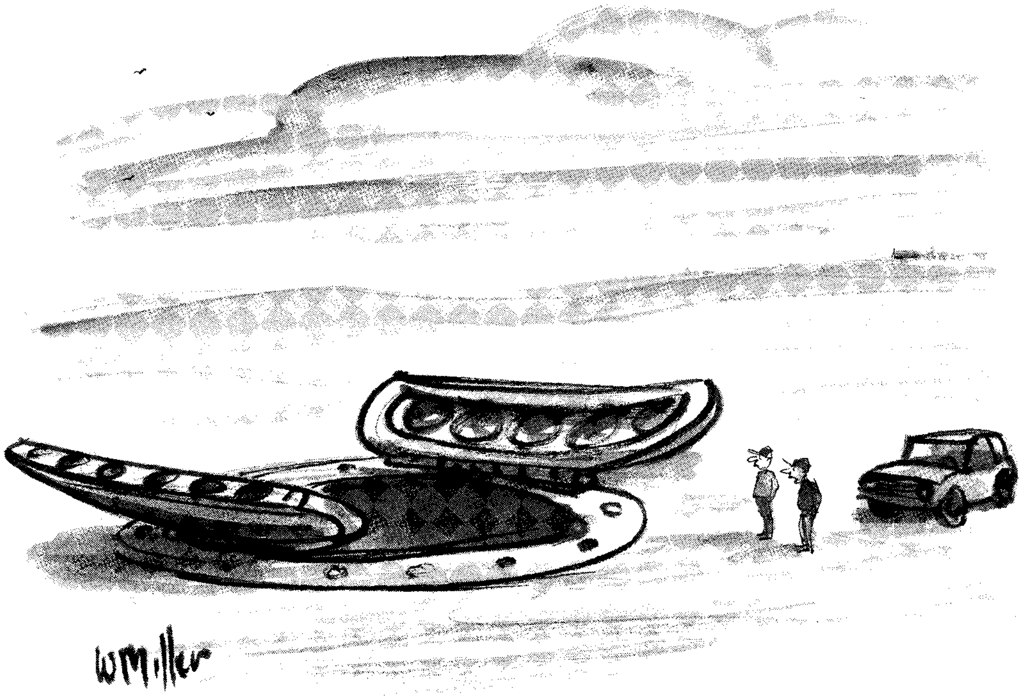
Its publication was immediately followed by rumors of strange sins and even stranger beliefs. "I wish they wouldn't call me a 'hedonist,' " he complained to the poet Edmund Gosse. "It produces such a bad effect on the minds of people who don't know Greek." The term "homosexual" had yet to be revealed to the world, but Pater was generally considered to be one of those "Uranians" or "urnings" who wore their green carnations—in a phrase of the period—"with a difference." He was even made a character in a comic novel, where, under the name of Mr. Rose, he is said "to talk of everybody as if they had no clothes on." He was more strongly affected by the controversy than he ever cared to admit, though, and was afterward said to look "like a man pursued by the Furies." Denis Donoghue quotes a contemporary report of Pater's becoming "old, crushed, despairing," which adds, "This dreadful weight lasted for years." It was a question of the world's trespassing upon what he called "reserve." Of his own sexuality he never spoke, and there is no reason to suppose that he ever engaged in a sexual act involving anyone other than himself. We might remark of his homosexuality something like what Dickens' dying Mrs. Gradgrind whispers: "I think there's a pain somewhere in the room . . . but I couldn't positively say that I had got it." Pater had thought to hide himself in the sinuosity of his prose but instead had become trapped by it.

DONOGHUE, in his wonderful study of Pater's languid strangeness, offers a persuasive argument for considering him the precursor of the modern movement in English letters. "The Renaissance" suggests that he was the first English writer to deliberately distance himself from the world of orthodox morality—to elaborate what Donoghue calls an "adversary life" in a period "when official life was deemed to be bourgeois, Protestant, imperial, male, and heterosexual." But, of course, this cultural perception must rely upon a persuasive reading of Pater's temperament, and here Donoghue brings to his academic discernment the divining skill of the novelist. "Walter Pater: Lover of Strange Souls" begins with its subject's death and ends with a beginning, as Pater inaugurates the modern age. It is a biography, but one in which the biographical facts become material for exegesis, and do not stop with mere report. Where Thomas Wright, in his 1907 biography, spent some hundred and forty pages discussing Pater's early years, Donoghue manages to dispatch them in twenty. This is a "brief life," to use one of Donoghue's phrases, but it is immensely suggestive: in a number of short chapters, which read like elegies, he elucidates Pater's fiction and essays with subtlety and genuine sympathy. He sees Pater to have been, for example, "withdrawn as if it were a matter of principle from anything that presented itself for attention." This hits precisely the right note. Pater avoided what the world would probably call "significance." He hesitated, always unsure, but he lived in the space of his hesitations and exulted in his uncertainty. His philosophy, if that word can be used, is perhaps best comprehended not as Aestheticism but as a strange mixture of skepticism and idealism, celebrating the sensational moment while at the same time trying to derive some visionary understanding from it. In the process, he cast up a mist of words in which "intensity," "experience," and "impressions" can be glimpsed in a fitful light.

The reaction to "The Renaissance" so terrified and subdued Pater that he published only a handful of articles over the next twelve years. Upon the reissue of "The Renaissance" in 1877, he removed its famous conclusion on the ground that, he later said, "it might possibly mislead some of those young men into whose hands it might fall." Two "might"s here were not mighty enough, and he went on to say, "I have dealt more fully in 'Marius the Epicurean' with the thoughts suggested by it." He is referring here to the 1885 novel that was the hothouse fruit of his twelve years' exile, the saga of a lonely soul in his journey through various forms of belief. It was a critical success, and was acclaimed a tour de force. Yet it has not worn well. It is neither poetry nor prose but some withered offspring of the two. It is filled with ornate meditations and contrived descriptions, but at its best it reads like Mrs. Humphry Ward at her worst. After its publication, Pater settled in London for a time, and, emboldened by its success, he wrote more essays, attempted some short fiction, and even, on occasion, gave public lectures. The last were not very public, however, because of his unnaturally restrained manner. "Did you hear me?" he asked Oscar Wilde after one event. "We overheard you," Wilde replied.

All these labors eventually made up a collected edition of some eight volumes, but what, in the end, are we to make of it? Donoghue is such an astute critic that through the alchemy of his prose Pater becomes a much finer and stronger writer than is generally supposed. There are occasions, of course, when even Donoghue has to accept the poverty and prolixity of his subject's "thought"; he confesses that aspects of his theory "are not clear to me," and at times he comes across "a confused sentence." The fact is that Pater is confused about most things; he rejected the moral certainties of Arnold and of Ruskin, but he could not create an adequate critical vocabulary from his own impressions. As a result, he is at once vague and overemphatic. His essays intermittently approach the condition of Muzak—a delicate cacophony of unfinished sentiments. Much of his work also approaches meaninglessness, in the same spirit as the long silences with which habitually he decorated social conversations. That he positively seems to enjoy not saying anything at all is an aspect of his fear of self-revelation, or commitment. Reading Pater is like listening to Wilde through a conch shell.

As Donoghue puts it, "he was always shy in intellectual matters and shrank



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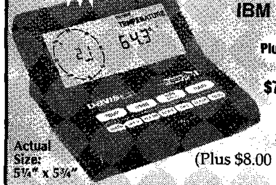

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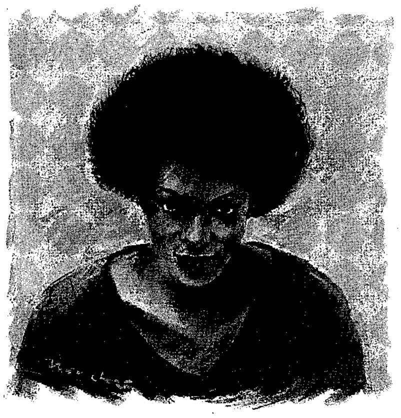
from engaging on equal terms with the personages of scholarship and rhetoric." But there are times when reserve becomes a form of cowardice. His greatest labor was self-censorship, and his greatest fear was of literary reviewers. In revising an 1876 essay entitled "Romanticism" thirteen years after its publication, for example, he deleted Whitman's name and replaced a reference to Baudelaire with a reference to Hugo; the allusion was more discreet. On other occasions, he excised any passages that suggested the delights of Greek friendship, and omitted anything to do with "the life of the senses." In middle age, he recoiled from such prose as if he had unexpectedly touched someone's flesh. And this cowardice was part of a larger withdrawal from the world. It was said by many of his contemporaries that, somehow, he shrank into himself during his middle age. His light was one that failed. That is also true of his work; as has been the case with many Oxford dons, his youthful sensibility was preserved in amber. Neither his art nor his personality ever developed beyond that point; if they had, he might have become a real artist—or, at least, a real essayist, in the tradition of Lamb or Hazlitt. That is why his true heirs were perhaps not Joyce and Pound, as Donoghue suggests, but Harold Acton and the Sitwells.

When the news came of Pater's death, in his fifty-fifth year, Wilde asked, "Was he ever alive?" And, indeed, his life, as one looks back on it, does seem to have been suspended on a very slender thread of events. Pater called death "the last curiosity," and it is somehow appropriate that he should have been buried at Oxford during the summer vacation. Yet he left an apt legacy: within his endless hesitations, velleities, and divagations he had found a prose style that was so exact a simulacrum of his life that it became a substitute for it. Only a single question remains unanswered: How *does* one burn with a hard, gem-like flame? ♦

TWENTIETH-CENTURY DEMETER

Our Poet Laureate recasts the classic mother-daughter myth.

BY HELEN VENDLER



Rita Dove

RICHARD MERCHAN

RITA DOVE, the United States Poet Laureate (occupying a post that used to be called, more accurately, Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress), has recently published "Mother Love" (Norton; $17.95), her sixth book of poems. (Her previous works include the Pulitzer Prize-winning "Thomas and Beulah.") In these books, Dove, who is black, has in part carried on a lyric tradition that explicitly treats themes of blackness, but she has also written many poems outside that tradition—poems of childhood and family life, of travel, of motherhood, and of aesthetic experience itself. These draw upon the events of her life but do so with remarkable objectivity. She was born in 1952 in Akron, Ohio, and educated at Miami University in Ohio. A Fulbright brought her to Tübingen; after that, she took an M.F.A. at the Iowa Writers' Workshop and is now Commonwealth Professor of English at the University of Virginia. She is married to the German novelist Fred Viebahn, and they have a daughter, Aviva.

"Mother Love" is not the first of Dove's volumes to address motherhood. The theme was evident—and very originally handled—in some poems in "Grace Notes," a volume published in 1989. There she observed motherhood in a detached manner. If she did not go so far as Blake in seeing a baby as "a fiend hid in a cloud," she did say, memorably:

        We
give our children dolls, and
they know just what to do—

line them up and shoot them.

She was equally unsentimental about the houses in which family life takes place:

Each house notches into its neighbor
and then the next, the whole row
    scaldingly white,
unmistakable as a set of bared teeth.

Now in "Mother Love" (dedicated: "FOR my mother / TO my daughter") Dove brings into close focus the pained relation between mothers and daughters. The book takes as its central myth the story of Demeter and Persephone, the archetypal story of mother love, which was invented to explain the origins of seasonal change. When Persephone is abducted by Hades, the king of the Underworld, her mother, Demeter, who is the goddess of agriculture, ceases, in her grieving, to attend to the crops, and everything withers. Finally, the gods restore Persephone, but, because she has eaten six pomegranate seeds while she was in Hades' kingdom, she can remain with her mother only six months of the year. This myth has already been used, notably by Tennyson to represent Demeter's sorrow and by the contemporary poet Jorie Graham to explore the predicament of a woman who is both daughter of her mother and mother of a daughter. In Dove's hands, the story is used to investigate the value of myth as a perennial interpretative device.

Dove has always liked to approach any complex subject from a variety of perspectives. "Mother Love" opens with a poem about the rape from Hades' point of view, and that is followed almost immediately by a poem showing a mother's mixed feelings as she inflicts a first party dress on her mutinous but blushing daughter. Later, the social anomalousness of the bereaved mother (an object half of sympathy, half of blame) is contrasted with her inward trauma. And there is even the poem of the innocent bystander, witness to the rape.

The most realistic of these poems is a long sequence in which Dove translates the mother's loss into modern terms: an American girl has gone to live in Paris and has become involved in an affair with an older man; they have opened a gallery to sell his dubious paintings and souvenirs of Paris to unsuspecting tourists. The sequence—a narrative in seven parts followed by four poems in sonnet form—succeeds, by and large, with the mother and daughter but makes the abductor a stage villain. At the cocktail party where he meets Persephone, he is shown musing:

God, humans are a noisy zoo. . . .

I need a *divertissement:*
The next one through that gate,
woman or boy, will get
the full-court press of my ennui.

He has only to twirl his mustache to become a cartoon. Demeter is more subtly revealed. Meeting her daughter at "The Bistro Styx" in Paris ("She was thinner, with a mannered gauntness / as she paused just inside the double / glass doors"), the mother is appalled:

                I saw she was dressed all in gray,
from a kittenish cashmere skirt and cowl

down to the graphite signature of her shoes.
"Sorry I'm late," she panted, though
she wasn't, sliding into the chair, her cape

tossed off in a shudder of brushed steel.
We kissed. Then I leaned back to peruse
my blighted child, this wary aristocratic
    mole. . . .

                                He'd convinced

her to pose nude for his appalling canvases,
faintly futuristic landscapes strewn
with carwrecks and bodies being chewed

by rabid cocker spaniels. . . .

                She did look ravishing,
spookily insubstantial, a lipstick ghost on
    tissue. . . .

I've lost her, I thought, and called for the bill.

Dove's foreword alerts her readers to her use of the sonnet (in various irregular and half-rhyme forms) in "Mother Love":

I like how the sonnet comforts even while its prim borders . . . are stultifying; one is constantly bumping up against Order. The Demeter/Persephone cycle of betrayal and regeneration is ideally suited for this form since all three—mother-goddess, daughter-consort and poet—are struggling to sing in their chains.

In one interpretation, the myth embodies the natural departure of the daughter from the mother so that she may enter the realm of sexuality; the mother sees this as betrayal (forgetting her own earlier participation in the cycle), and in the mother's version of the story Hades

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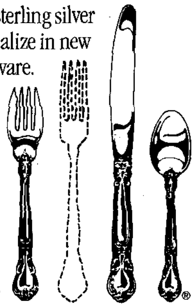

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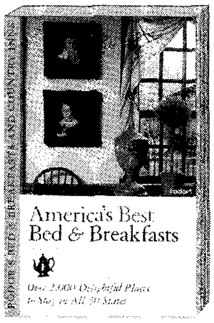

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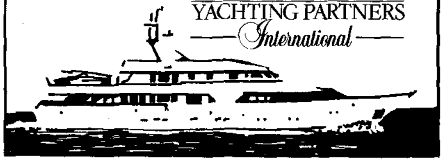

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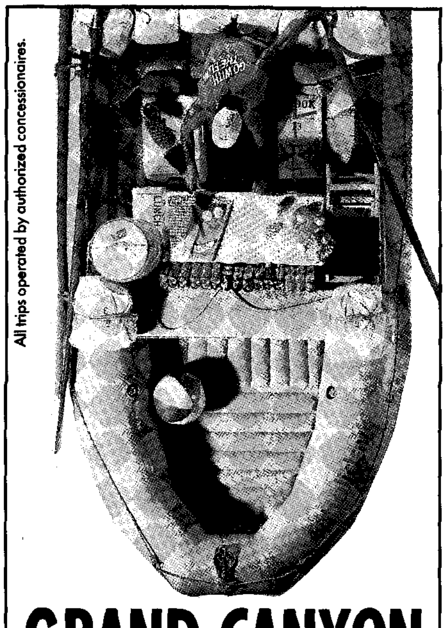

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is the abductor, the seducer of the innocent. But the daughter knows better; and several of Dove's poems examine Persephone's complicity in her own disappearance. In "Rusks," done in black demotic, Persephone views her abductor as the proverbial half a loaf that is better than none:

> Let someone else have
> the throne of blues for a while,
> let someone else suffer mosquitoes.
> As my mama always said:
> half a happiness is better
> than none at goddam all.

I admire Dove's willingness to slant the myth upward to sublimity, downward to the ordinary, and—at her best—outward to the uncanny. Here is the sonnet "Missing," where the voices of Persephone and Demeter melt together in the modern story of the lost adolescent:

> I am the daughter who went out with the girls,
> never checked back in and nothing marked my "last
> known whereabouts," not a single glistening petal.
>
> Horror is partial; it keeps you going. A lost
> child is a fact hardening around its absence,
> a knot in the breast purring *Touch, and I will*
>
> *come true.* I was "returned," I watched her
> watch as I babbled *It could have been worse. . . .*
> Who can tell
> what penetrates? Pity is the brutal
> discipline. Now I understand she can never
> die, just as nothing can bring me back—
>
> I am the one who comes and goes;
> I am the footfall that hovers.

The elegance of this ending is the mark of Dove's best work. Persephone comes and goes; Demeter waits and hovers.

"Mother Love" is an unsparing book. It observes both the vanity of mother love ("duty bugles and we'll /climb out of exhaustion every time") and the cliché of its appeal ("Any woman knows the remedy for grief / is being needed"). These sardonic remarks appear in the title poem of the volume, which tells the story of Demeter's transmutation into a monster. What, Dove asks, must have happened inwardly to Demeter as a result of Persephone's abduction? The Greek myth shows the mother resigned to her yearly loss, annually withdrawing from and resuming her aid to agriculture; but Dove tells a counter-myth, one in which Demeter goes mad, consumed with rage against maleness and subject to a savage mourning. In Dove's poem, a woman, pitying the bereft Demeter, offers her a male child to nurse, thinking that it will console her. Instead, Demeter decides to "save" the baby from the vicissitudes of experience by burning him to death. This is Dove's gothic tale of maternal grief gone wrong:

> Each night
> I laid him on the smoldering embers,
> sealing his juices in slowly so he might
> be cured to perfection. Oh, I know it
> looked damning: at the hearth a muttering crone
> bent over a baby sizzling on a spit
> as neat as a Virginia ham. Poor human—
> to scream like that, to make me
> remember.

If this is mother love, it is a force that can distort personality like few others. A book taking on such a subject is not neat—for all Dove's wish to be neat—nor can it be, in an ordinary sense, beautiful. It is often harsh and often lurid. It is at times sentimental in wanting to be lurid. But it is an energetic book—one that throws motherhood into the arena of the mind and says, "Look at it."

It is typical of Dove's moral evenhandedness that, having thought so much about the relation between mothers and daughters, she has also explored the subject of sons. In a play called "The Darker Face of the Earth," which will have its première in 1996, she has moved the Oedipus myth into a Southern slave setting. And it is typical of Dove's literary restlessness that, after writing poems, stories, and a novel, she decided to try her hand at a play. She is not the first writer to refresh poetry at the wells of fiction and drama; but Rita Dove is first and foremost a poet, one whose laser glance exposes and cauterizes its subjects in new and disturbing ways. ◆

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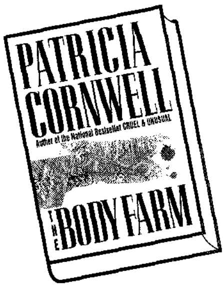

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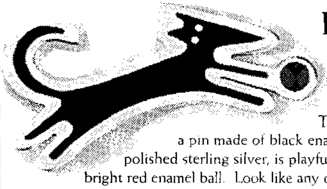

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As Bierds explores the lives of others—mostly nineteenth-century figures—from the inside out, lyricism blends with scientific scrupulosity to give these poems a powerful charge. Whether illuminating odd corners in the life of Beethoven, Darwin, Toulouse-Lautrec, or some anonymous child, she manages to turn anecdote into epiphany—to translate idiosyncratic information into emotionally persuasive acts of historical recovery. Perhaps because she is the least egocentric of poets, the apparently autobiographical poems in this book are especially moving.

Dared and Done: The Marriage of Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning

by Julia Markus
(Knopf; $30)

"I . . . love these verses with all my heart—and I love you too." So wrote Robert Browning in his astonishing first letter to a poet he had never met. A remarkable epistolary courtship followed, and a love story that has overshadowed two other potentially remarkable tales: what happened after their wedding, and why Elizabeth's father forbade every one of his children to marry. Markus's casual insistence on the Brownings' marital happiness robs her of a plot, but her look at Mr. Barrett and his family's racial history offers more than one revelation.

The Double Flame

by Octavio Paz
(Harcourt Brace; $22)

"A human being is never what he is but the self he seeks," Paz writes. This is a work of erotic erudition, and not—to avoid confusion—of erudite eroticism. Here Paz is a philosopher and taxonomist of love. He is interested in what we seek through the erotics of mind and body, and in what propels our search. Many things will linger in your memory after reading this book, for instance: "The history of love is inseparable from the history of the freedom of women."

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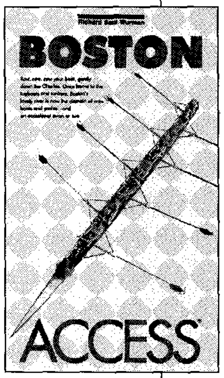

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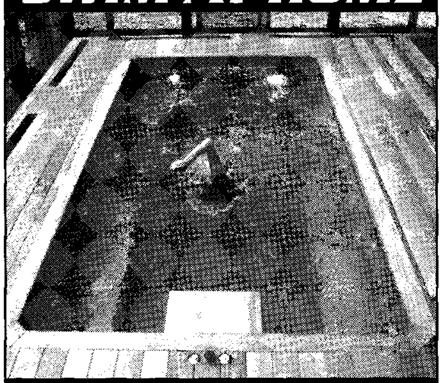

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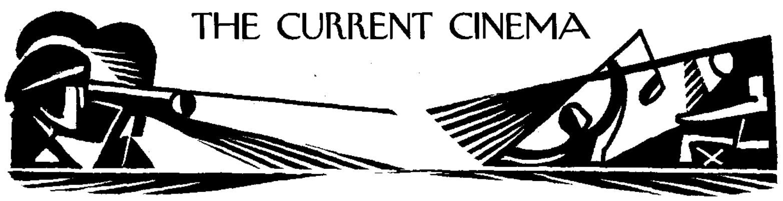
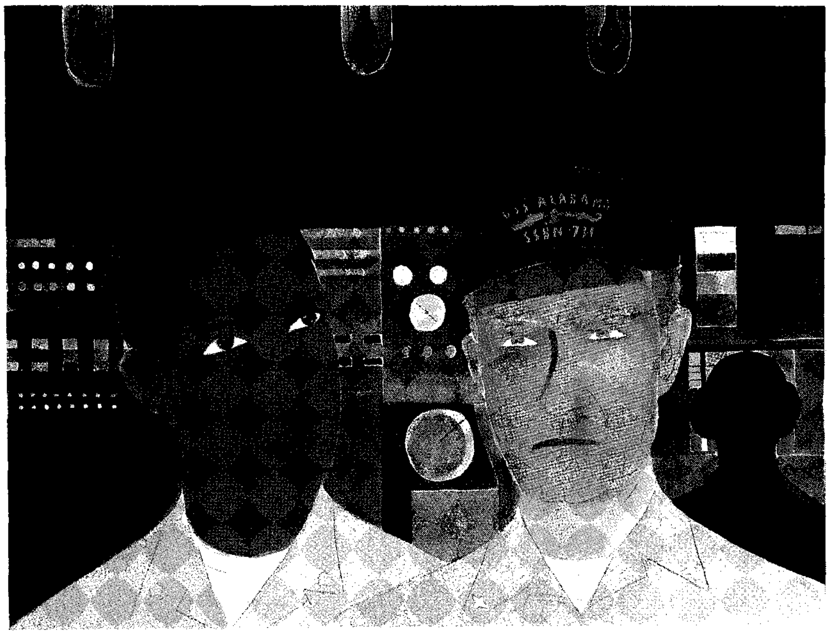


GOING UNDER

A loud submarine thriller and a quiet English comedy.

BY TERRENCE RAFFERTY

"CRIMSON TIDE" is a movie for people who really miss the Cold War—for those who feel, perhaps, that life without the threat of nuclear holocaust is a little drab. Paranoia about the Evil Empire has been mighty useful to big-budget Hollywood filmmakers. One of the great advantages of suspense based on the possibility of global annihilation is that it allows moviemakers to bypass the painstaking work of creating believable, sympathetic characters; viewers can get clammy with anxiety while not actually caring about any of the people in the movie, because the fear that doomsday scenarios exploit is essentially the audience's fear for *itself.* This sort of plot can be adapted to suit almost any ideological agenda: for liberals, high-minded cautionary tales about the virtues of restraint and rational discourse; for right-wingers, kick-ass adventure yarns in which weapons are flourished boldly and the other guy blinks. And there will always be viewers whose pulses quicken at the mere sight of shiny, expensive military hardware. The producers of "Crimson Tide," Don Simpson and Jerry Bruckheimer, lucratively tapped that audience in "Top Gun" (1986), a movie about Navy fliers in which virtually nothing of consequence happens. For "Crimson Tide," which is set mostly on a nuclear submarine, they have ordered Tony Scott, the British advertising auteur who directed "Top Gun," to take the helm again: Scott knows how to whip up seductive images of high-tech military power—how to make the hard surfaces of deadly weaponry glisten like ice-cold bottles of beer.



Denzel Washington and Gene Hackman in "Crimson Tide."

GEOFFREY PARKER

The screenplay, by Michael Schiffer, revives the Cold War spirit by putting Russkies on the rampage again. This time, the enemy isn't a huge totalitarian state but a small group of rebel fanatics, led by a Zhirinovsky-like demagogue named Radchenko, who have seized a missile base. The United States leaps into action as an ally of the legitimate Russian government. No matter: the situation inevitably evokes the familiar Us-against-Them feeling, and gives the audience the comfortable sensation of visiting a historic battlefield. Frank Ramsey (Gene Hackman), the captain of the nuclear sub U.S.S. Alabama, briefs his crew on its mission: if Radchenko arms his missiles, the Alabama will launch a preëmptive strike. Before he lets his men go, the aging warrior announces, "Now we're back in business." Hackman is too intelligent an actor to deliver this line with the ringing, make-my-day bravado that was obviously intended. But, despite his quiet, matter-of-fact reading, there's no doubt that these words are the most succinct formulation of the movie's sensibility. The old conflicts are back, and so are Simpson and Bruckheimer, who, after a string of appallingly successful pictures in the eighties ("Flashdance" and a couple of "Beverly Hills Cop" movies in addition to "Top Gun"), fell on hard times in the post-Reagan years. But their recent "Bad Boys" is a hit, and when "Crimson Tide" spreads through the multiplexes, it could be morning again in America for Simpson and Bruckheimer.

In this case "back in business" means "business as usual." "Crimson Tide" operates in such well-charted waters that it feels less like a dangerous naval mission than like a luxury cruise: the accommodations are cozy and the activities carefully planned. Once the film has laid out the basic elements of the military crisis (and it doesn't waste a lot of time, or skill, on that), it settles into a stable, entirely predictable war-movie narrative. The story of "Crimson Tide" is the one in which the authority of a rigid, unimaginative leader is challenged by his younger and more thoughtful second-in-command—here, the Alabama's executive officer, Lieutenant Commander Ron Hunter (Denzel Washington). Ramsey, a combat-hardened veteran, chomps cigars, plays mind games with his officers, and refers to himself proudly (but a little defensively) as "a simple-minded son of a bitch"; Hunter, who has been educated at Annapolis and Harvard, is reflective and prudent. Their mutual wariness is by the book (the book is "The Caine Mutiny"): the usual mixture of class antagonism, generation-gap suspicion, and conflicting philosophies of command. Their differences come to a head when the Alabama is ordered to launch its missiles. Before the order can be carried out, a second, incomplete message comes through: Hunter wants to delay the launch until the sub, which has been damaged in battle, can reëstablish communication and make certain that the second order doesn't rescind the first; Ramsey, of course, wants to go ahead, and is furious with Hunter for questioning his judgment.

During the rest of the picture, Ramsey and Hunter struggle for power, and for the loyalty of a very confused crew. (It's confused in more than one sense: Scott, who is not gifted at characterization, fails to individualize the crew members, either by personality or by function, and they seem to merge into a single, sweaty mass.) While the two officers bicker and take turns relieving each other of command, the renegade Russians' missiles are counting down to apocalypse, the fate of the world hangs by its customary thread, and—just to reassure us that old movie devices never die, and rarely even fade away—the sub's communications officer frantically tries to fix the pesky radio. Hackman and Washington play their eyeball-to-eyeball scenes expertly. They're so good that they occasionally manage to make us forget that there isn't really much suspense about the picture's outcome. Simpson and Bruckheimer aren't about to end their movie with the end of the world: it wouldn't have tested well with the preview audiences.

Besides, the movie is so timid about taking sides in the central conflict between the conservative Ramsey and the (relatively) liberal Hunter that it cuts off what should be the audience's direst suspicion—that the captain is an outright psycho (like Richard Widmark in the superb 1965 doomsday thriller "The Bedford Incident"), determined to get back in business all the way and at any cost. Hunter is unambiguously the hero; he's lither, handsomer, and more articulate. But the filmmakers won't risk alienating the gung-ho segment of the audience by portraying Ramsey as a dangerous madman. He's just lonely and limited; he dotes on his Jack Russell terrier, and the little fella loves him, too. The only truly frightening thing about "Crimson Tide" is its state-of-the-art Dolby sound, which in a fully equipped theatre turns

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Speechless, considering, feet well apart:
exactly how my mother would take root
deep in the garden, so you stand. It's early;
a summer day spreads out.
Bushier by the hour, long wavering rows
form lines and paths and furrows as of thought
marking a brow.
It's a small garden; no
reason for amazement if you tread
neatly in the footsteps of the dead.
Stealthily day by day
tomatoes, beans, cucumbers take on gloss
and heft, and everything seems effortless,
except the digging, planting, weeding—plus
the same vague tenderness,
the deep and inexhaustible green brood
you now are lost in, standing where she stood.

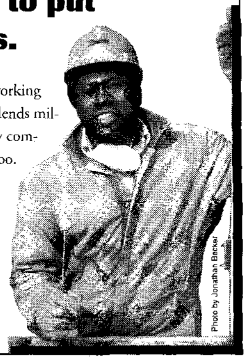
—Rachel Hadas

every small explosion into a thunderous jolt that feels as if it were rearranging your internal organs. Even though you know that this picture isn't going to end with Armageddon, every action sequence creates a frisson of dread: you're afraid that some unstable sound engineer, his fingers twitching at the controls, is going to panic and unleash the Big One.

Hugh Grant, the star of "The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill but Came Down a Mountain," has a nice smile: a bashful-boy twinkle that perfectly complements his fluttery eyelashes, his engagingly awkward gestures, and his general air of modest, befuddled sincerity. He has limp, straight hair that flops nonchalantly down his temples, indicating that, despite fine features and extreme courtliness, he isn't a sharpie. His charm seems reluctant, almost inadvertent. Appearing to be unaware of one's own attractiveness is a very attractive quality: Grant's sheepishness marks him as a true gentleman, whose sex appeal is unaggressive, unvulgar—thoroughly civilized. It's the sort of shtick that can turn a competent, good-looking actor into a romantic icon, and in last year's "Four Weddings and a Funeral" Grant deployed his small arsenal of mannerisms so deftly that viewers began to compare him to bygone British dreamboats like David Niven, and even Cary Grant. In "The Englishman," however, the illusion of ease has vanished from Grant's acting, and his charm has gone with it. Watching him here is like having a conversation with someone who smiles *constantly:* after a few minutes, the unvarying geniality becomes disconcerting, and after ninety-nine minutes (the running time of this movie) those beautiful teeth seem to have taken on the avid, predatory look of Mack the Knife's pearlies.

The movie, written and directed by Christopher Monger, works just as strenuously to enchant us as its leading actor does, and to comparable effect. The story—which, according to the filmmaker, is based on a legend of his Welsh home town—is a slight, pleasant anecdote about a peculiar manifestation of local pride during the anxious days of the First World War. A pair of English surveyors, Reginald Anson (Grant) and George Garrad (Ian McNeice), arrive in a sleepy rural village in southeastern Wales. Their purpose is to measure, for the Ordnance Survey, the area's most prominent landmark—an elevation, called Ffynnon Garw, that the villagers have always referred to as a mountain. It has the distinction, the townsfolk believe, of being "the first mountain in Wales"; that is, the first a traveller would see upon crossing the border from England. The Ordnance Survey, however, has established a strict standard for mountainhood: nothing less than a thousand feet high qualifies. Ffynnon Garw comes up a bit short, and the villagers, led by a randy publican known as Morgan the Goat (Colm Meaney) and their vicar, Reverend Jones (Kenneth Griffith), decide to bring their almost-mountain up to snuff. They mobilize to give the hill an extra twenty feet, but, because the earthmoving project will take some time, they also have to figure out a way to keep Anson and Garrad from leaving town; the surveyors have to stay long enough to remeasure the augmented peak.

While Monger is setting up his silly plot, "The Englishman" seems an amiable anachronism. It's an obvious throwback to the eccentric-community formula that served filmmakers well in the postwar glory days of British comedy: in pictures like "Passport to Pimlico" and "Whisky Galore" (both 1949), dotty, benignly roguish neighbors band together to do something pointless and frustrate the powers that be. The inane enterprise in "The Englishman" is just the sort of outlandish obsession that such comedies require: the humor derives from the disproportion between the characters' passions, which are grand, and the actual value of their project, which is trivial. For the first half hour or so of "The Englishman," you watch contentedly, waiting for the comic absurdity of the situation to blossom. But it never does. Catastrophically, Monger tries to pile more meaning onto his story than its fragile structure can support. As the picture goes along, the villagers' mountain-building seems less and less the expression of an epic stubbornness—the quality that made it funny at first—and more and more a symbol of home-front heroism. Monger gives us to understand that his characters' determination to turn Ffynnon Garw into an official mountain is fuelled by the desire to compensate for the emotional ravages of the war: they want to feel like a real community again, and to be recognized; for their service to the Crown, they deserve a place on the map. Like Grant, Monger overtaxes his lightweight virtues and winds up subverting them. What "The Englishman" ultimately demonstrates is that it's senseless to mess with a small good thing. All concerned waste a lot of energy in the attempt to make the movie look bigger than it is, and in the end all they've really done is given themselves a longer way to go downhill. ♦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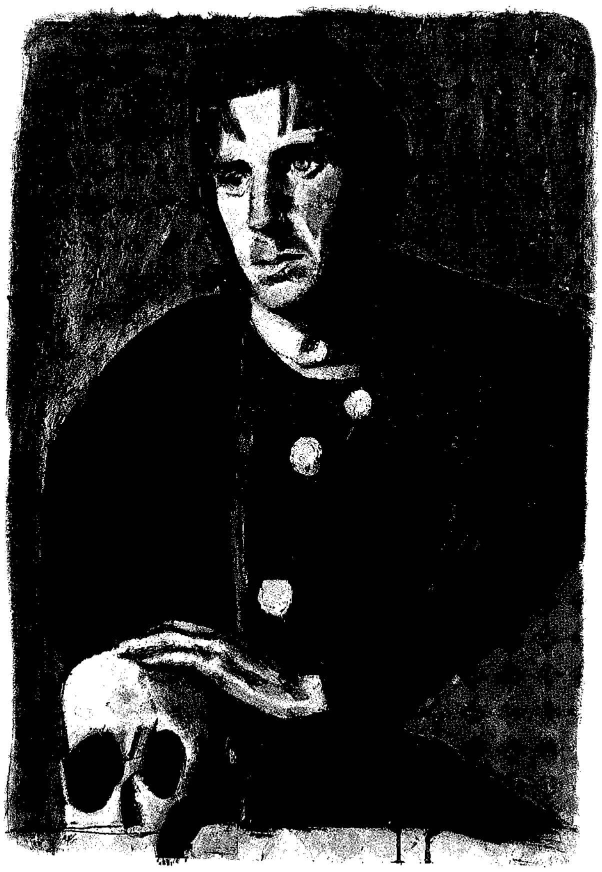
MATINÉE IDOLATRY

A Broadway "Hamlet" brings elegant angst to Elsinore.

BY JOHN LAHR

"HAMLET" is a play that tests the best actors of each generation, and also each generation's sense of itself. Over the last thirty years, in England, no fewer than three "Hamlet"s have served as such cultural bellwethers. In 1965, during the Vietnam War, David Warner gave us an untidy undergraduate Hamlet who was frustrated by Denmark's military-industrial complex. In 1980, as Britain's economy went into a weird free fall, Jonathan Pryce's Hamlet was possessed by the ghost of his father, who spoke through him in a frightening supernatural flirtation with madness. And now, in the neutral, post-Thatcher nineties, Ralph Fiennes has pitched his drop-dead matinée-idol profile and the modesty of his sensitive soul into a post-modern "Hamlet" whose refusal to risk interpretation reflects Britain's current bland and winded times.



Ralph Fiennes as Hamlet: playing giddy grief, and skirting the issue of interpretation.

ANDREA VENTURA

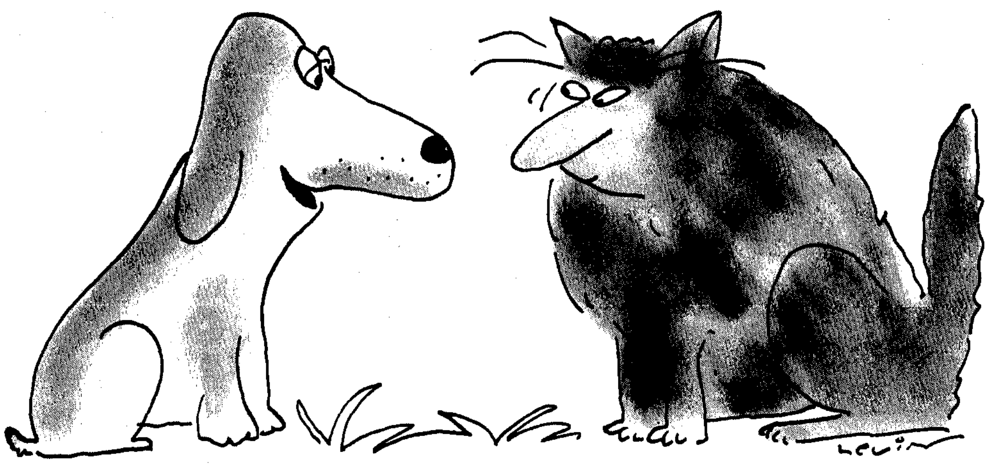
Fiennes, an intelligent, reticent player, seems almost as unwilling to enter the vortex of Hamlet's torment as Hamlet himself is to take action. Fiennes radiates an elegance of spirit that rivets the audience with its sense of unspoken mystery. His performance is a stylish event, much more the "mould of form" than the "glass of fashion." He has a mellow, reedy voice that filters Shakespeare's gorgeous complexity and gives the language an accessible colloquial ring. Fiennes is not one for grand histrionic gestures. His personality doesn't take up a lot of space. He compels attention by his decency, not by his declaiming. Fiennes, who has limpid green eyes and tousled chestnut hair, and who is a laid-back, brooding, romantic star, is catnip to the public and oxygen at the box office. (The Almeida Theatre Company's production, which began its much ballyhooed life at the Hackney Empire, the wonderful old music-hall venue in London's East End, has arrived at the Belasco for a fourteen-week Broadway engagement.) This "Hamlet" has been designed to be a people's "Hamlet," which is to say a "Hamlet" in which the plot, not the psychology, is complicated, and in which the cast works the room instead of working for meaning. Inevitably, therefore, Fiennes's Hamlet is not a navel-gazing scholar or an alienated adolescent or a demented psychological case study. His Hamlet turns out to be the guy Horatio always said he was: a "sweet prince," a sort of rogue and *pleasant* slave.

The director, Jonathan Kent, who last year transferred the Almeida's "Medea," with Diana Rigg, to Broadway with great success, has set the play in Edwardian England and has lopped an hour off the playing time. The speed favors breadth over depth; the streamlining suits the cut of Fiennes's jib, and he wears James Acheson's period clothes well. What we have here is a ripping Shakespearean yarn that shows off the thrills and chills of the story's melodramatic elements: the ghost of a murdered king, a mother's hasty marriage to her husband's murderer, a prince driven to near-madness and revenge, a lovelorn suicide, a lot of ghoulish high jinks around graves, a terrific sword fight, and a quadruple poisoning. The result is lucid without being moving: a kind of aerobic "Hamlet," which works hard to keep up the pace while going nowhere.

The lights come up on a bare, raked stage, and the sound of crashing waves fills the auditorium. In the background, the environs of Elsinore are suggested by faint, blurred beams of light projected through a murky scrim on which the outlines of rocks are just visible. A sentinel climbs up through a trapdoor—more for effect than for sense, it seems, like many things in this production. "Who's there?" he calls. That's the play, the whole existential ball of wax. Hamlet's entire dramatic journey is foreshadowed in these first words. He, too, must penetrate the surrounding darkness and tease out the reality of his parents, of the corrupt court, and of himself. By finally taking action—which means accepting loss, including the loss of his own life—Hamlet sees clearly into the heart of things and achieves his adulthood. In this sense, "Hamlet" is both a detective story and a metaphysical investigation. The practical and the philosophical aspects of the tale need time to build properly; as the saying goes, "No delay, no play." But here, with the proceedings speeded up, the text is not so much examined as *done*. It's significant that Fiennes attacks the "To be, or not to be" soliloquy, which sets out Hamlet's spiritual quandary, by coming toward us in manic stutter steps and turning the famous meditation into yapping thought. He skirts the issue of interpretation by turning talk into behavior. The image is novel; but little nuance comes across the footlights. In this ranting mode, dissembling a madness that is really giddy grief, the barefoot Fiennes grabs Ophelia's crotch and insolently shoves Claudius's shoulder. But Fiennes can't really get up a convincingly antic head of steam. He is slow to kindle and never really burns. He's not so much tormented as pissed off.

Fiennes has his best moment with the Gravedigger (the excellent, grizzled Terence Rigby, who also plays Hamlet's father's ghost and the Player King). Listening to the Gravedigger expound matter-of-factly on how a body decomposes, and learning that a skull he has unearthed belonged to Yorick, the former King's jester, Hamlet gently takes this relic of his old acquaintance from the Gravedigger. "This?" Fiennes says, uttering the word with a huge sense of recognition, wonder, and sadness. His sensitivity and the mournfulness of the moment coalesce. "Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar?" Fiennes says, with a delicacy that delivers Shakespeare's observations about mortality like a punch to the heart.

THE production's obsession with surface has its most effective expression in Peter J. Davison's sets. He creates a dark, lugubrious officialdom of behemoth ceilings, heavy brown-stained doors, and large shuttered windows that turn the actors into scuttling Lilliputians. Hamlet is first seen framed by one of these gigantic windows, standing upstage with his back turned away from the bustle of power, whose aggrandizement is reflected in the monumentality that surrounds it. Still, Davison, too, succumbs to the production's impulse to startle rather than compel. The ghost is conjured up on a high platform behind the scrim. There, lit from above by the white glare of a halogen lamp and announced by a jolt of electronic sound, Hamlet's dead father appears twice, in his carapace of armor: a "Star Wars" effect that is a projection of commercial instincts more than of Hamlet's unconscious. Similarly, Jonathan Kent's eye for business is sometimes shrewder than his eye for detail. When Laertes and Hamlet take turns leaping into Ophelia's grave and embracing her body, each trying to outdo the remorse of the other, the poor dead girl bobs up and down like a hand puppet. And at the finale, when Fortinbras (Rupert Penry-Jones, who is also Fiennes's understudy) arrives to take over the kingdom that Hamlet has died to save, his Aryan good looks and the gray capes of his lieutenants

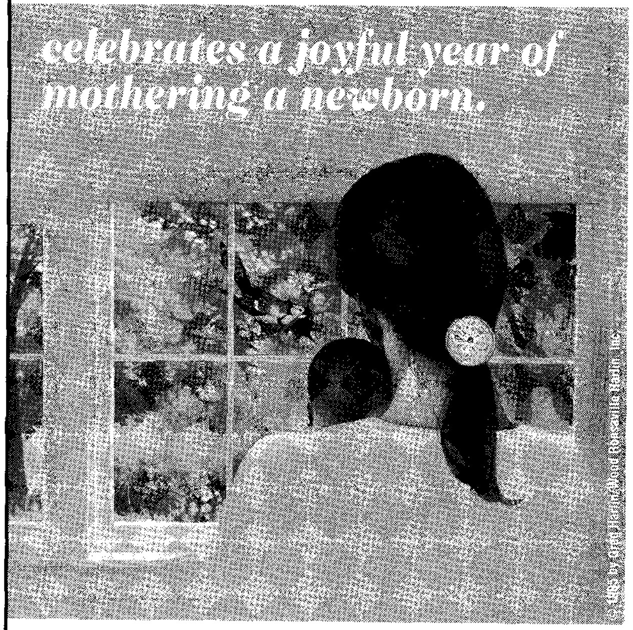


"You know, I've never seen you without your whiskers before."

make it seem as if the Luftwaffe had invaded Denmark.

In American theatrical circles, the definition of a genius is anybody from England. But the prestige of this production can't hide the unevenness of its seasoned supporting cast, who prove the adage that British actors are either tours de force or forced to tour. Besides Terence Rigby, only the lanky, bearded Peter Eyre, as Polonius, breathes distinctive life into his role. Eyre plays the meddling bureaucrat as a long drink of cold water: cleaning his pince-nez as he counsels his hotheaded son to "neither a borrower, nor a lender be," and withholding his hand from Laertes when he goes, Eyre misses no opportunity to have fun with the old blowhard's pedantry. Polonius rushes to the Queen with a letter that Hamlet has sent his daughter, and reads it to her as a presenting symptom of Hamlet's lunacy. Reciting " 'To the celestial and my soul's idol, the most beautified Ophelia,' " Eyre's Polonius bristles with dopey patrician disdain. "That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase, 'beautified' is a vile phrase," he says, and gets one of the evening's best laughs.

Others are not so much at home in Shakespeare's climate of delirium. Tara FitzGerald, a talented young actress with a bright future, flounders as Ophelia. There is nothing fractured or vulnerable about her, and when Ophelia goes mad FitzGerald won't let her rip. FitzGerald's behavior—the compulsive walking back and forth, the sexual taunts directed at Claudius—feels tame and glib: a trick of the mind, not a journey of the heart. Often, when English actors are nowhere near the center of their parts they rely on the power of their articulate voices; James Laurenson's Claudius falls into the trap of such posturing. Claudius is John Gotti with a pedigree—carnal, vicious, power-hungry, ruthless—but Laurenson gives us chicanery on the half shell. He does a lot of Urgent Shakespeare Acting. A few wheeling turns upstage, some nips at the top of his hand, a little booming oratory, and—presto!—you have a villain. This stock rep stuff is also dished up by the beautiful Francesca Annis, as a Gertrude who can't manage much grief at the sight of Ophelia's dementia but does manage a long, lingering kiss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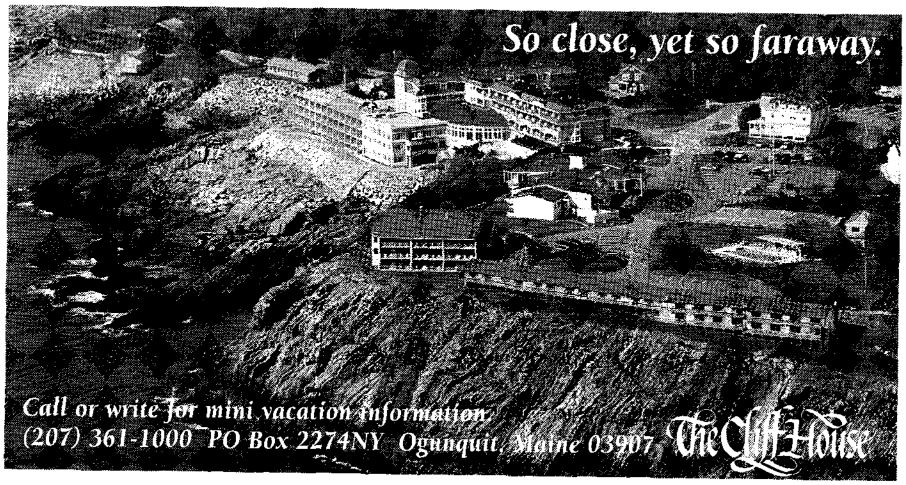
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with Hamlet. It's a bit of business that has become the theatrical baggage of the role in this century, but the incestuous overtone seems inappropriate, especially in such an unanalytic production.

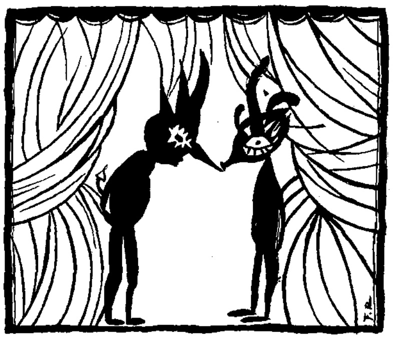
A word about Hamlet's duel. Jonathan Kent and the fight director, William Hobbs, have built up this face-off between idealism and treachery into a scintillating contest that takes excellent advantage of the story's melodrama. A cream-colored tarp is rolled downstage for the match, and the court sits watching upstage right, in gray upholstered chairs. Hamlet fights with graceful, playful enthusiasm, unaware that he's up against the double whammy of Laertes' poisoned sword and Claudius's poisoned chalice. Hamlet gets the first couple of touches; then Laertes' temper flares, and he cuts Hamlet. They scuffle, and in the hurly-burly their swords get mixed up. Hamlet chases Laertes around the room, sending chairs flying and courtiers scurrying for safety. It's exciting and well-staged hokum, in which Laertes ends up hoist with his own petard. At that point, the Queen, who has drunk from the chalice, collapses; then the Grand Guignol of Shakespeare's ending quickly plays itself out. At the finale, Fortinbras's men lift Hamlet's corpse on their shoulders and, swaying, carry him slowly upstage and toward the light beyond. Fiennes's head falls back, giving the audience one last glimpse of the star. Even backward, upside down, and dead, Fiennes exits looking good. ♦

PLAYING WITH DESIRE

Cocteau's "Indiscretions" and Tennessee Williams's "The Rose Tattoo."

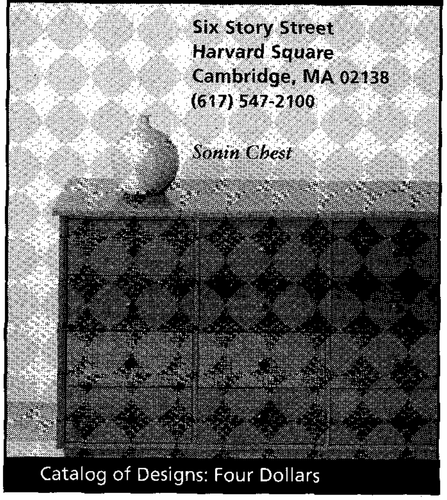
BY NANCY FRANKLIN

THE world is filled to overflowing with works of art created out of a sense of deprivation and absence; fulfillment, on the other hand, tends to be its own fat reward, putting an end (temporarily, anyway) to the possibility of possibility. Both Jean Cocteau's "Les Parents Terribles" (now at the Ethel Barrymore under the dumbed-down title "Indiscretions") and Tennessee Williams's "The Rose Tattoo" (at Circle in the Square) emerged during periods of great romantic and sexual happiness in their authors' lives, but these works are not tame, purring products of contentment, and they certainly prove that all happy writers are not alike. In Williams's play, love goes off the charts; in Cocteau's, it goes off the deep end.



FRANCOISE ROUSSET

Cocteau set out to make a boulevard comedy, but this production, an import from London's Royal National Theatre, under the direction of Sean Mathias, comes close to swamping his intentions. Ominous bass notes rumble and a saxophone wails at the opening of the show, announcing, with heavy-handed portentousness (see "An Inspector Calls" for the precise definition of heavy-handed portentousness), that this is the boulevard of broken dreams. The curtain rises on an enormous room in a Paris apartment, a spectacle of disorder: clutter under the bed, clothes and papers everywhere, a stuffed armoire tilting dangerously. The first scene is all confusion. A woman in a nightgown and with wildly dishevelled hair (is she mad?) has taken an overdose, a man wearing goggles and a vaguely military outfit (is he a pilot? a spelunker? a kook?) rushes to save her and calls to another woman (a nurse?) for help. Eventually, we find out that we're in the middle of a fairly standard family psychodrama. Yvonne (Kathleen Turner), a chronically histrionic mother, is distraught because her son didn't come home the night before; her hapless husband, George (Roger Rees), and her efficient, cool-



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headed sister, Leo (Eileen Atkins), are trying to calm her down.

It takes a while for the comedy to get its footing, but even when it does the cast doesn't click as an ensemble. Stephen Brimson Lewis's set, though it wonderfully evokes Parisian interiors, is so spacious that the actors seem lost in it. And, while it would have been silly for the actors to pretend to be French, their accents cover such a broad range of the British map that none of them seem remotely related. Kathleen Turner, whose accent is not to be found on any map, is an unfocussed sprawl, and the makeup people didn't do her any favors by giving her a Bride of Frankenstein look. Still, she manages to convincingly deliver a few fail-safe possessive-mother lines that play like Jewish humor: when her son, Michael (Jude Law), tells her how happy he is now that he's got a girl, she says, "I see—this is how you repay me." In the second act, when the family goes to meet Michael's girlfriend, Madeleine (Cynthia Nixon, playing a part that is schoolgirlishly bland and underwritten yet asks us to believe that two men would kill for her love), things begin to jell. At the same time, the play gets thrown off balance, because Eileen Atkins threatens to gather up all the play's comic energy and run off with it. In the act's opening seconds, as she walks up the stairs to Madeleine's apartment, Atkins, using nothing but her pencil-straight bearing and her wise-owl eyes, telegraphs a clear message: "I'm in charge here." She's such a master of flamboyant minimalism, and so magnetic, that you begin to almost feel sorry for the other actors, and it comes as a relief when Leo recedes somewhat in the third act. As George, an inventor whose ideas fall short of usefulness, Roger Rees is all flamboyant maximalism—a whirlwind of ineffectualness, always jamming his hands in his pockets, running his hands through his hair, and pacing the floor like a neurotic leprechaun. An act of sexual violence that George inflicts on Madeleine in the second act is powerful, but only in the sense that it's so grossly wrong and uncalled for. And it's not in the script—it's another instance of interpretive heavyhandedness, as is the ending, a tableau vivant illustrating the perversities of desire which tear relationships apart and bind them together.

Jude Law, a young hunk with punky blond hair, is the only holdover from the London cast. As the son torn between childhood and adulthood, Law remains perhaps too rambunctiously boyish—when he regresses, at the end, he goes merely from being a big puppy to being a small puppy. For the record, this season's phallomania continues unabated: when Law gets out of the tub at Madeleine's, he takes so long to dry himself off that you could run home, get your binoculars, and be back in your seat before he's finished.

"'THE ROSE TATTOO'" was my love-play to the world," Tennessee Williams once said, a declaration whose honesty and excessiveness mirror the message of the play. In its unashamed, full-frontal embrace of sexual healing, "The Rose Tattoo" has the guts to risk being ridiculous—that's both its glory and the glory of the character Williams created to carry his message, Serafina delle Rose. Every character, every action, and practically every line of the play is overdetermined and potentially laughable; an actress really has to believe in the part to take it on. (And she has to look good in a black slip—but then, just as all men look good in a tux, all women look good in a black slip.) Anna Magnani, who played the role in the movie version, was a magnificent animal; Mercedes Ruehl, the star of the Circle in the Square production, knows how to play one. She's comfortable with Serafina's emotional nakedness and with her Sicilian shtick, a funny and affecting combo of rapidly alternating piety and hot-bloodedness. And Anthony LaPaglia, as Mangiacavallo, the young man who replaces Serafina's dead husband, Rosario (with whom she shared, by her count, four thousand three hundred and eighty consecutive nights of bliss), brings a sweet openness to his role. I don't know exactly what Ennio Morricone's gorgeously lush soundtrack music, which includes highly identifiable themes from "The Mission" and "Once Upon a Time in the West," is doing here, punctuating big moments that shouldn't need that kind of heart-tugging underscoring. It works, and I like it, but I don't approve. ♦

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WHAT'S THE GOOD WORD?

BY CALVIN TRILLIN

NOT long ago, the people in my neighborhood—Greenwich Village, in lower Manhattan—were faced with a new problem. Our subway stop was being made beautiful, and we hadn't figured out how to complain about it. The phrases that trip most easily off the tongues of New Yorkers are expressions of complaint. If a linguistic anthropologist camped out in Manhattan for a while, I suspect he'd discover that New Yorkers have fifty or sixty different phrases for expressing irritation and maybe two for expressing enthusiastic approval ("not that bad" and "it could be worse").

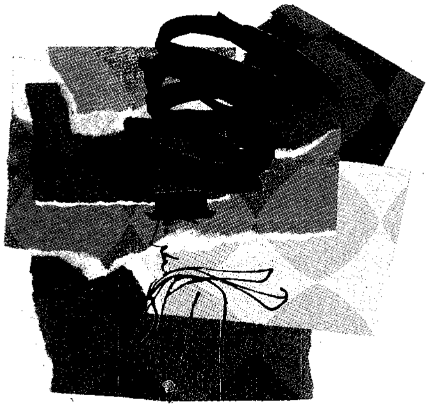
The average subway rider would associate expressions of enthusiasm with people he'd describe as being from "Iowa or Idaho or one of them." (As I have pointed out before, true New Yorkers do not distinguish among states that begin with the letter "I.") For generations—since long before the great cities of this country became associated in the public mind with their problems rather than their wonders—New Yorkers have believed in the old saying that they learn at their mother's knee: "If you can't say something nice, you're never in danger of being taken for an out-of-towner."

This was not the first time the Metropolitan Transportation Authority had presented us with an awkward situation: in recent years, all the old subway trains in New York have been replaced with shiny new silver trains, which are absolutely free of graffiti. They are also air-conditioned.

If you live outside of New York—or if you are one of those thickheaded New Yorkers who prefer traffic jams to subway travel—you are probably thinking that the preceding paragraph was one of my little jokes. It wasn't. The New York subways really do have flashy new cars, but New Yorkers rarely mention that fact. It's a difficult thing to complain about.

Not impossible. I've heard a lot of people complain that the absolutely frigid air-conditioning in the subway cars makes the stations, which are still not air-conditioned, seem even hotter than they are. I've heard people say that they miss the graffiti—which is apparently cleaned off at the end of every run, so that there isn't much reason to put it on in the first place—and resent the censoring of this urban folk art by the philistines who run the M.T.A. It is also possible to complain about how the decision to acquire new cars was made—or, to put it in the local vernacular, how the M.T.A. unilaterally and high-handedly, without consulting the people who actually use the subways every day, decided to force comfortable and attractive new subway cars on the public.

Improvements in the transportation system rarely meet with the approval of New Yorkers. Some years ago, the then mayor, Edward I. Koch, came back from China smitten with the idea of bicycle transportation. He had protective strips of concrete installed to create a bicycle lane up Sixth Avenue. People complained. Eventually, the concrete strips were removed.



I mentioned at the time that you might have expected the taxi-drivers to hate the Mayor's innovation, since it had cost them basically one lane of traffic. ("He likes China so much, he shoulda stood in China.") But who complained most bitterly about the bike lanes? The bicyclers. The true New York bicyclers—particularly the messengers—complained that the bike lane was full of pedestrians and garment-center pushcarts and bike riders who were described as "schlepping around on Raleigh three-speeds."

"Schlepping" is Yiddish, a language that all true New Yorkers—including Irish cops and Dominican grocers and Pakistani newsdealers—speak a little of, partly because its rhythms are famously conducive to complaint. One Yiddish word that all New Yorkers are familiar with is "kvetch"—which actually means "to complain." You often hear them say to each other, "quit kvetching"—to no apparent effect.

So you can see the sort of problem my neighbors and I faced as workmen in our station replaced worn tiles and restored lovely old mosaics. At first, we made do with complaining about the pace of the work. ("Are they ever going to finish this place?") A couple of people tried to argue that the stunning new floor would be slipperier than the grungy old floor.

At one point, while a neighbor and I waited for an uptown local, I decided that I had to express my approval of the renovations, even at the risk of being taken for somebody from Indiana or Illinois. (I'm from Missouri.) "Not that bad," I said, gesturing toward the shiny tiles and the stunning new floor.

My neighbor looked around. "It could be worse," he admitted. "But where the hell is the train?" ♦

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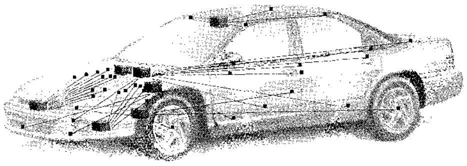

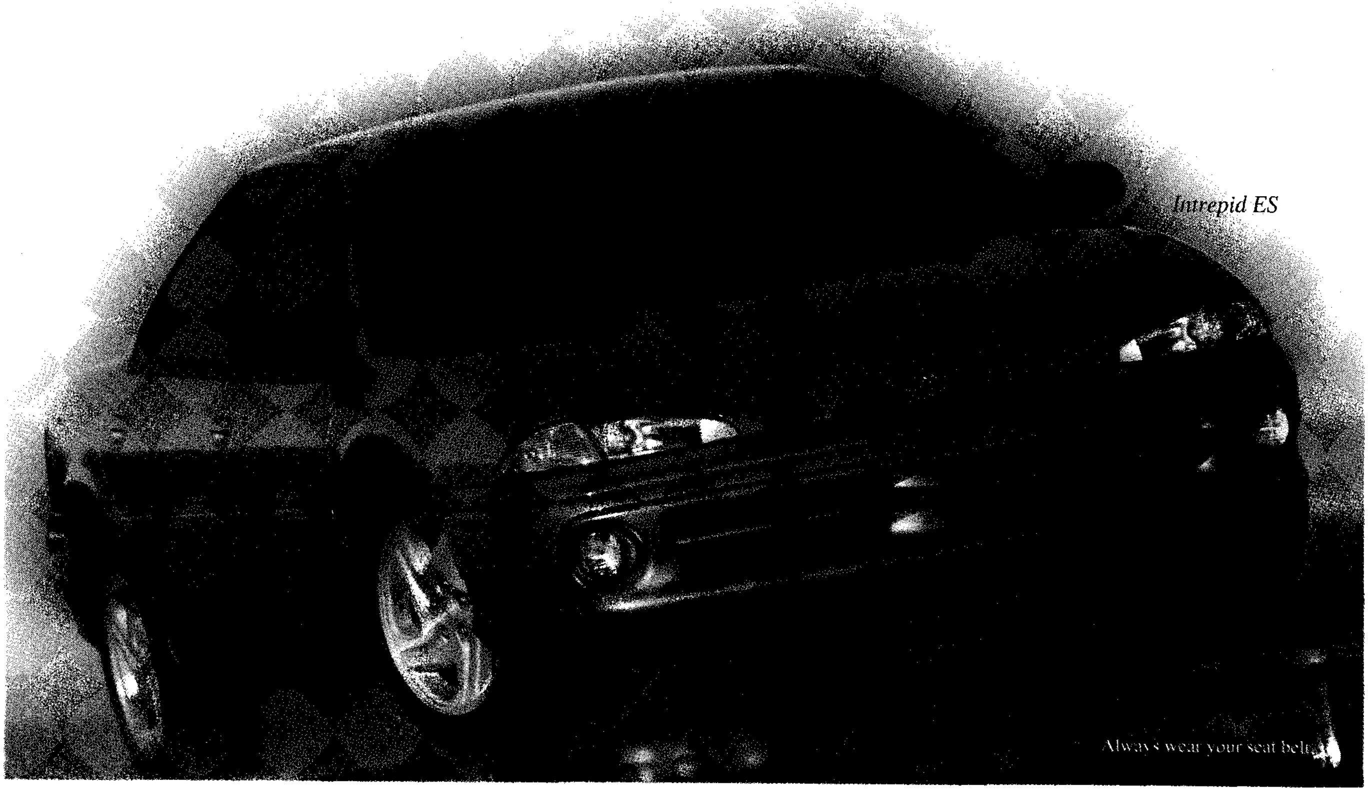
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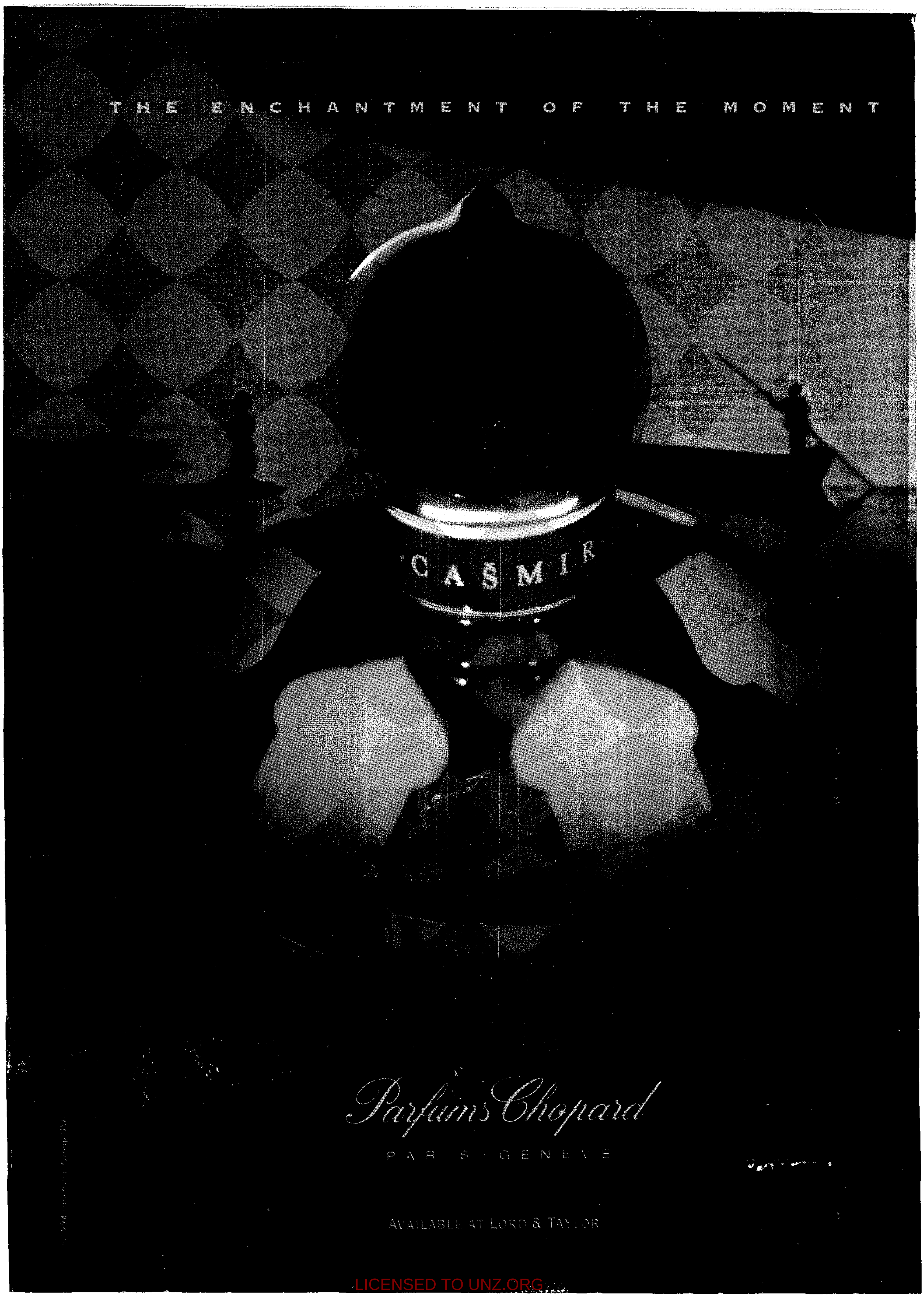

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